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The Big Easter Bank Holiday Quiz

INSIDE TIMES2

Liverpool fight back to deny Arsenal crucial win at Anfield

The Game

Labour will blame PM for crashing economy

Controversial attack ads to go on, vows party

Matt Dathan Home Affairs Editor

Labour is to launch more "provocative and aggressive" adverts attacking Rishi Sunak this week by blaming him personally for crashing the economy and for soaring mortgage and council tax rates.

The party is doubling down on its controversial strategy of claiming the prime minister is responsible for prosecution and sentencing and will expand its remit to economic and health policies.

Further adverts by Labour this week, seen by The Times, will claim that Sunak thinks it is "acceptable" for council tax to rise above £2,000 and that he "thinks it's right" that people are having to pay higher housing costs and mortgage rates.

The party believes it will be hard for Sunak to hit back because he will have to place the blame for economic chaos on Liz Truss, his predecessor. However, the strategy is seen as risky as it could backfire by exposing Labour's lack of tax-and-spending policies.

Labour is also planning even more "controversial and disruptive" adverts this month that will return to the issue of crime, accusing Sunak of "effectively decriminalising rape". They will be launched for "maximum impact" days before local elections on May 4.

An ally of Sir Keir Starmer, the Labour leader, said that the initial adverts were "only the start of things to come", adding: "You ain't seen nothing yet." The party is facing a backlash after releasing a Twitter poster last week that claimed Sunak did not think child sex abusers should go to prison.

Starmer defended the advert, saying that Labour was right to attack the Tories for overseeing low prosecution rates and soft sentencing. "I make absolutely zero apologies for being blunt about this. I stand by every word Labour has said on the subject, no matter how squeamish it might make some feel," he wrote in the Daily Mail. "When 4,500 child abusers avoid prison, people don't want more excuses from politicians — they want answers."

A shadow cabinet minister said of hostile adverts: "The Tories do this every election — they smack us around the face and we lie down, but this time we're not going to lie down, we'll smack them back harder."

Allies of Starmer have hailed the success of the attack ads so far. One of the Labour insiders involved in creating them said: "It was a deliberate plan to be provocative and disruptive and, to be honest, I don't think anyone thought it would work this well.

"This is how, in a digital age, you cut across the channels and talk to people directly. The second and third tweets in the series, about guns and theft, made headline news just for being put out there. You couldn't pay for that."

A shadow cabinet minister said: "This has ticked all the boxes, it's cut through, it's got noticed and we're now having a genuine debate about the government's record on crime, which was the objective."

An internal row over the adverts is likely amid growing unease from some in the party. Labour MPs branded the advert claiming Sunak was to blame for child sex abusers avoiding jail "gutter politics" and a "dog whistle".

The adverts have also split the shadow cabinet, with Yvette Cooper,

Continued on page 2



Royal blue Prince Louis and the Princess of Wales at St George's Chapel, Windsor, where Charles led his family at Easter matins for the first time as King. Pages 6-7

Surgeons face MeToo moment over sexism

Jonathan Ames, Rachel Sylvester

Dozens of doctors voiced support for female surgeons after they labelled NHS operating theatres "boys' clubs" rife with sexual harassment.

The allegations, reported in The Times on Saturday, prompted a leading medic to call on surgeons to "speak up and challenge sexism". Neil Mortensen, president of the Royal College of Surgeons of England, made his plea in response to growing claims that bullying and harassment have been routine in the profession for years.

He acknowledged that action was needed to stop "recurring behaviour" after the report said that more than half of female surgeons had complained of sexist abuse.

Some said the level of sexual harassment and bullying in operating theatres in England would prompt a "#MeToo moment" for the NHS. Dozens of surgeons and other doctors used social media to come out in support of whistleblowers and in some cases give their own accounts.

Responding to several of the cases highlighted, Mortensen, 73, said "surgeons must speak up and challenge sexism, harassment or any sexual misconduct experienced or witnessed".

Several female surgeons alleged that sexual harassment at work ranged from crude banter and bullying to assault. Roshana Mehdian-Staffell, 37, an orthopaedic surgeon, highlighted a "boys' club mentality in surgery". She said she had been "sexually harassed lots of times", and highlighted an incident when a surgeon at medical school had allegedly made her feel "extremely uncomfortable".

Mehdian-Staffell said that on her last day at the school she received a message from the surgeon that said: "I want to say goodbye before you go. I'm coming to your accommodation." She said she was "so terrified that I threw everything into a bag and ran out. I had nightmares about it for years."

Two years ago, Philippa Jackson, a consultant plastic surgeon, told the college that a male colleague hugged her in an operating theatre and said: "You probably felt my erection then."

More widely, Fiona Myint, the

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IN THE NEWS

SNP investigation
A £110,000 motorhome has been seized from outside the home of Nicola Sturgeon's mother-in-law, apparently as part of the police investigation into the SNP's finances. **Page 5**

Funeral for sisters
Thousands of people attended the funeral in Efrat, south of Jerusalem, of two British sisters who were killed last week in a drive-by shooting in the West Bank. **Page 9**

School strike ballot
Every school pupil could miss five days of school next term as teaching unions hold ballots on strike action after rejecting government pay offers. **Page 10**

Migrant housing
Home Office staff have been told to find accommodation for at least 25,000 migrants, including families with young children, from a list of disused Crown properties. **Page 12**

Ukraine fightback
Ukrainian forces are understood to be preparing a counter-offensive as President Zelensky seeks to capitalise on high morale after his army's successes late last year. **Page 28**

Stock exchange risk
Initial public offerings on the London Stock Exchange fell to their lowest in a decade in the past financial year, underlining concerns about the capital's international status. **Page 33**

VISIT…

LANZAROTE Caliente.com

Today's highlights

7.45am **Emily Thornberry**, shadow attorney-general
11.05am How the British electoral map is changing — with the pollster **Robert Hayward** and the former cabinet minister **Robert Buckland**
3.35pm **Suzanne Heywood**, right, on her book Wavewalker: Breaking Free about her childhood sailing around the world
8.35pm **Eleanor Tucker** will discuss her guide book-meets-memoir about trying to borrow, rent and swap instead of buy



TIMES RADIO
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TODAY'S EDITION

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'Piggy walks' are popular with tourists in Wales
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Jessica Morgan left Britain to beat the cost of living
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Nike's advert perpetuates ancient male fears of true female physicality and endangers young girls
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Protection call for bird route

Britain is trying to elevate one of the world's most important avian migratory routes and Shetland's Iron Age settlements to the list of the world's most significant cultural and historic sites. **Page 17**

Richard III not such a bad lad

The Richard III Society has secured the republication of a lost 17th-century history that casts the last Plantagenet king as good and just as it tries to improve his reputation. **Page 21**

One for all in French cinemas

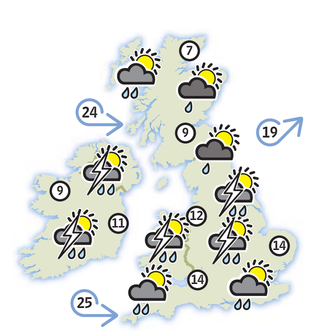
A blockbuster adaptation of *The Three Musketeers* has been released in French cinemas on the back of hopes that it would lift the national mood and see off Hollywood. **Page 31**

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THE WEATHER



Blustery with spells of rain and heavy showers, thundery at times.
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Sunak urges renewed effort on Northern Ireland deadlock

Matt Dathan Home Affairs Editor

Rishi Sunak urged Northern Ireland's political parties to remember the "compromise, bravery and political imagination" of their predecessors as he used the anniversary of the Good Friday agreement to make a renewed call to restore power-sharing.

It is 25 years since the Belfast deal was signed, ending three decades of violence known as the Troubles. The prime minister said the occasion presented the parties, along with the British and Irish governments, with the opportunity to "recommit to redoubling our efforts" to fulfil the agreement's promise of "economic opportunity, prosperity and stability" after more than a year without the Stormont executive meeting.

The prime minister will travel to Belfast tomorrow to welcome President Biden, who will take part in events in Northern Ireland on Wednesday before visiting Dublin, Co Louth and Co Mayo in the Republic of Ireland. Bill Clinton, who played a key role in brokering the deal as US president in 1998, will also visit Northern Ireland to mark the anniversary.

Power-sharing has not functioned in Northern Ireland since February last year when the Democratic Unionists withdrew their first minister in protest at the Northern Ireland protocol covering post-Brexit trading arrangements. Although the protocol has since been replaced with Sunak's Windsor framework, the DUP still opposes it.

Leo Varadkar, the Irish prime minister, said he planned to "intensify" engagement with Sunak over restoring power-sharing.

Sunak said: "This is an agreement born of partnership between the British and Irish governments and, as we will see from President Biden's visit this week, it continues to enjoy huge international support from our closest allies. But most importantly, it is based on compromise in Northern Ireland itself," he said.

"As we look forward, we will celebrate those who took difficult decisions, accepted compromise and showed leadership — showing bravery, perseverance and political imagination."

The prime minister added: "We must also recommit to redoubling our efforts on the promise made in 1998 and the agreements that followed…of economic opportunity, prosperity, and stability."

He said that it was his "duty and responsibility" to ensure that the institutions in Northern Ireland were up and running "as soon as possible".

Sir Keir Starmer, the Labour leader, said Northern Ireland was at "another crossroads" and that the agreement represented the "very best of what our politics can achieve — the triumph of hope over division, of peace over strife and of prosperity over conflict".

He said: "With political stalemate at Stormont and a period of difficult Anglo-Irish relations, we must use the spirit and the trust built by the architects of the Good Friday agreement to push us forward to another 25 years of peace and prosperity."

The Police Service of Northern Ireland has warned of the potential of dissident republicans attacking police officers in Londonderry today. MI5 raised the terrorism threat level to severe, which means an attack is highly likely. Chris Heaton-Harris, the Northern Ireland secretary, warned that continued peace could not be guaranteed. Writing in The Daily Telegraph, he said elements in the New IRA were trying to drag Northern Ireland back to the "dark old days" of the Troubles.

Sir Jeffrey Donaldson, the leader of the DUP, has insisted the political vacuum in the nation caused by his party's refusal to re-enter Stormont is not to blame for the deepening security fears.

Province's peace dividend, page 36

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1
Operating theatre harassment

vice-president of the college and a consultant at the Royal Free Hospital in London, said that "more than 50 per cent" of female surgeons had experienced harassment or abuse.

Mortensen described "the testimonies" from Mehdian-Staffell and others as "unacceptable and should never be tolerated". He said the college had formed a working party on sexual misconduct in surgery, designed "to make surgery a safe place for everyone to work in".

In September, and in conjunction with Exeter University, the working party surveyed surgeons across Britain and Ireland. It asked for information on how incidents of sexual harassment were dealt with by alleged victims and health service bosses. "We also want to know about those survivors who have left a career in surgery as a result of experiencing or witnessing sexual misconduct," said the group. The results are not yet published.

In the meantime, the revelations from Mehdian-Staffell and others over the weekend prompted an outpouring of support from women surgeons — and some male colleagues — on social media.

Emma Stapleton, a consultant surgeon and president of the North of England Otolaryngology Society, called on health service leaders "to make it safe for women to report bullying, harassment and assault".

Stapleton added that perpetrators of sexual harassment "don't politely stop when you report them. Rather, they escalate their efforts to humiliate and harm the person they've already humiliated and harmed."

Another surgeon, Rachel Guest, who is also a lecturer at Edinburgh University, said on Twitter that "a big step forward will be for surgeons who have not had these experiences to stop denying the realities of others. We must shift the power hierarchies of surgical teams so that toxic behaviours are not tolerated and criminality cannot happen."

Helen Allott, who is at the Liverpool School of Tropical Medicine after spending 22 years as a consultant obstetrician, argued that "nothing has changed" and said that 31 years ago, she was "called a 'bloody rabbit' on announcing my third pregnancy, by a male consultant who himself had three children".

Male surgeons also praised their female counterparts for raising the alarm about sexism and harassment.

Marcus Brooks, a vascular surgeon at the North Bristol NHS Trust, noted that with 30 per cent of new consultants in that specialist field being women, "we must get this right".

Free energy quota 'will give poor more help'

Arthi Nachiappan
Economics Correspondent

Households should be guaranteed a free amount of essential energy from the government in a reform that would support the poorest while encouraging people to cut consumption, a think tank has said.

The New Economics Foundation (NEF) argues that the scheme would cut energy bills for the lowest-income households by more than £1,000 a year.

The proposal would offer households a set amount of free energy, with half offered for free and half paid for at a low rate, coming to a total of 50 per cent of the pre-crisis cost. Households with higher energy needs, such as those with disabled residents or children, would be offered an additional free allowance.

The report argues that the government's energy price guarantee, which subsidises the energy unit rate, incentivises wealthy households to continue to use lots of energy rather than invest in better insulation or solar panels.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1
Labour attack adverts

the shadow home secretary, distancing herself from them. Sources told The Observer yesterday that she "had nothing to do" with the attack on Sunak. They have clarified that Cooper would not expect to be asked to approve the adverts, as the campaign on sentencing policy is being run by Steve Reed, the shadow justice secretary, and she was not commenting on whether she supported or opposed the adverts.

Other shadow cabinet ministers accused her of "cowardice", undermining Labour's election campaign strategy and pursuing a "self-serving" agenda. One of her colleagues said: "She's still trying to be leader. She's repeating the mistakes she made under Ed Miliband by talking to the members and not the voters. Yvette is misreading how you win the election."

There is even speculation that Cooper could be sacked in a reshuffle that could follow next month's local elections. Labour MPs tipped to replace her include Reed, Wes Streeting, the shadow health secretary, and Shabana Mahmood, the party's national campaign co-ordinator. Labour said that there were no specific plans for a reshuffle.

Polling to be published today suggests the attack ads could backfire, with 57 per cent of people saying politicians should show more compassion, compared with 9 per cent who say they are already too compassionate, according to a survey carried out by YouGov.

Jennifer Nadel, co-director of the Compassion in Politics campaign, which commissioned the poll, said: "The public have had enough. Politics should be the space where we come together to solve common problems and improve lives for the better — not a winner-takes-all punch-up that leaves us all weaker and worn out."

A Conservative Party source hit back at Labour's ads, saying: "If Sir Keir Softie can't even control fighting at the top of the Labour Party, how could he possibly be trusted to run a country? Another Labour spending spree will slap the taxpayer with a £90 billion bill and leave the British people to pick up the pieces — just like they did when they were last in government."

How to beat the ferry queues? Set sail!

A tall ship will bring the romance back for holiday sea crossings to the Continent, writes **Bruno Waterfield**

ALAMY



The journey across the sea will be longer and the arrival time unknown but travelling in the "new age of sail" will at least avoid the chaos of the ferry ports.

The billowing sails of a 100-year-old tall ship are waiting for those dreaming of a more romantic journey across the North Sea in an age when Eurostar's services are deteriorating and the ports of Dover and Calais are defined by queues.

An entrepreneur has unveiled plans to operate a "Fair Ferry" service with the two masted-sailing ship Morgenster, meaning Morning Star, due to carry passengers between the English and Belgian coasts.

Karel de Boer, 44, a Dutch businessman and sailor, said he wanted a "new age of sail that is environmentally friendly and with the romance of the sea".

A maiden voyage by the Morgenster from Ostend in Belgium to Ramsgate in Kent will set off on May 1.

Passengers will arrive in Britain with three days to cruise the Isle of Thanet and Kent coast, or visit London, before the return voyage — although wind conditions could curtail the length of time on dry land.





Morgenster, above and left, is about to set sail in style between Ostend and Ramsgate. Ferry trips to Belgian beaches from Dover have always been a tourist favourite

"It is not a traditional crossing but a real sailing trip," de Boer said. "We're entirely dependent on the wind. That means we don't know exactly when we will arrive.

"An active and open attitude is a must, from hoisting the sails to navigating. You can also take over the helm for a while. So it is much more than just a crossing."

That first voyage to test the water for demand will involve the reopening of a cherished historical connection between Britain and Europe.

In 2013 Transeuropa Ferries filed for bankruptcy, closing a route between Ramsgate and Ostend that had been in use for hundreds of years.

The closure was a blow to both ports, with Ostend harbour having been a hub for crossings since 1584 and Ramsgate a unique "royal harbour" since 1749.

The desire for alternative forms of transit from Britain to the continent has probably increased during the past two weeks with large queues of holidaymakers forming at the port of Dover.

Thousands of people were held up for as long as 14 hours in delays blamed on the administrative burdens imposed by Brexit.

De Boer said he was hopeful the Ostend-Ramsgate route could be restored with frequent crossings available in "fast sailing ships".

"While out sailing, I came to the realisation that it was such a shame we no longer used sailing ships for day-to-day purposes, especially on the North Sea where the wind blows almost all the time," he said.

"We use too much fossil fuel at the moment. Sailing is a wonderful way of avoiding that — a new age of sail that is environmentally friendly and with the romance of the sea."

It is certainly a ferry with a difference. While conventional ferries charge for tickets in tens of pounds and euros, a return ticket on the Morgenster costs around £700 but there is also a chance to learn about sailing first-hand.

The 46-metre ship, built in 1919, can accommodate 24 passengers in two and four-bed cabins. Depending on the wind, the crossing between Ostend and Ramsgate takes between ten and 30 hours. In the coming days Morgenster will be inspected by the Maritime and Coastguard Agency, the final bureaucratic hurdle to the new service.

If it is a success, the company aims to invest in a new class of passenger sailing ships modelled on the yachting technology used in races such as the America's Cup.

"We want to make crossings with fast sailing ships accessible to a wider public in the future. Who knows? [Perhaps] we can restore the Ostend-Ramsgate line and organise more frequent crossings," De Boer said.

"These classic old ships are very beautiful and wonderful but we want to look to the future and the modern technologies being developed that are quicker. This will be more feasible for a larger audience."

Kidnap mystery of Gary the gorilla

George Sandeman

King Kong was easy to spot when he ran amok in New York City but Gary the giant gorilla is proving a little more elusive.

For a decade, Gary, an 8ft model made of fibreglass, helped to signpost customers towards Reynard Nursery in Carluke, Lanarkshire.

He had been known to wear festive costumes at Christmas and even covered up with a facemask during the coronavirus pandemic.

Last month, however, he went missing from his place outside the garden centre. CCTV showed a car arriving and two people unbolting the statue. Hours later a van arrived and Gary was gone. Despite the best efforts of police, the trail quickly went cold.

Andrew Scott, who owns the nursery,



The gorilla on the trailer that turned out to be a false lead in the inquiry

had a glimpse of hope last week. A gorilla statue had been spotted on a trailer on the M25 and the M40 near Warwick. Police investigated but found it was a different model that was being taken from London to Whitehaven, Cumbria.

Gary, who cost £3,000, is one of several large gorilla models that were manufactured at the same time.

"Unfortunately it's not Gary, it's one of [his] brothers. So we are a bit disappointed because we were really hoping it was him," Scott said.

"I'm pretty convinced we'll get him back. It'll take some time but we've not stopped looking.

"The response from the public was huge so the minute Gary makes an appearance anywhere, I'm sure the public will help us find him and get him back to where he belongs."

He added: "We saw him disappear into the darkness on that wet night and we haven't seen him since. We believe the thieves are now sitting with an 8ft statue they can do nothing with. Let this be a warning to the criminals, you can run but you can't hide for ever."

First-class felon: Weinstein upgraded for flight to jail

Alistair Dawber Washington

Harvey Weinstein was flown first-class from Los Angeles to New York to resume his jail sentence for rape and sexual assault.

The former film producer, who was already serving a 23-year sentence in New York, was given an additional 16 years by a California court in February. He remained in custody in Los Angeles until his journey back last week.

According to the news website TMZ, he flew on Wednesday and was put in first class with officials and medical staff. The Los Angeles district attorney's office paid for the flight. "[Weinstein] was returned to New York via a method we typically use pursuant to our extradition agreement with New York," a spokesman said. Weinstein, 71, has been sent to the Mohawk Correctional Facility on medical grounds. He is believed to have a heart ailment among other health problems.

A former model has filed a lawsuit claiming that a Miramax executive raped her after luring her to a hotel with the promise of a meeting with Weinstein. Sara Ziff says Fabrizio Lombardo, who was head of Miramax in Italy, assaulted her in 2001 when she was 19. The lawsuit names Weinstein, Miramax and Disney as defendants, claiming they knew Lombardo was a "danger to women" but did not protect her. Lombardo has not commented on the claim.

RUSSELL SACH



There and back The sculptor Ben Russell adds limewash to a continuous line cut into Portland Stone gathered near his Dorset studio. The work, Algorithm TSP, deals with the travelling salesman problem in maths of finding routes that never cross or repeat. It went on show at the Cotswold Exhibition, Cirencester, on Good Friday

Quintagram® No 1598

Solve all five concise clues using each letter underneath once only

1 Challenge, put under strain (3)

_ _ _

2 Season (6)

_ _ _ _ _ _

3 Openly accessible (6)

_ _ _ _ _ _

4 Parcel (7)

_ _ _ _ _ _ _

5 Classic Bing Crosby film (7,3)

_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

A	A	A	A	B	C	C	D
E	E	G	H	I	I	I	K
L	L	M	M	N	N	O	P
P	R	S	T	U	U	X	Y

Solutions T2 MindGames p15
Cryptic clues T2 MindGames p14

Man shot dead at flats

Police in Sheffield have begun a murder investigation after a man in his twenties was shot early yesterday. He was found with gunshot wounds at a block of flats in the Gleadless Valley area and pronounced dead at the scene. His family have been told but formal identification has yet to take place and a post-mortem examination is also awaited. Detective Chief Inspector Phil Etheridge said that inquiries were progressing "at pace".

GPs offered £200 an hour to cover A&E in strike 'that threatens lives'

Ben Ellery
Matt Dathan Home Affairs Editor

GPs are being offered thousands of pounds a day to work in A&E departments this week during a walkout that medical bosses fear will cost lives.

NHS managers are offering up to £200 an hour — twice the normal rate — to cover for doctors who will strike for four days from 7am tomorrow. Some hospital trusts in London are offering to pay up to £2,400 for a 12-hour shift, The Mail on Sunday said.

Will Quince, a health minister, pleaded with the public to use hospitals "responsibly". The walkout by junior doctors is likely to leave hospitals missing up to half their workforce.

Hospitals are urging patients to attend A&E only if their condition is life-threatening. The strike is likely to be more disruptive than previous walkouts because it coincides with the Easter bank holiday, school holidays, Ramadan and Passover.

Steve Barclay, the health secretary, yesterday accused the British Medical Association (BMA) of adopting a "militant stance" while seeking a pay increase for junior doctors of 35 per cent, which he claimed would give some a pay rise of £20,000.

Members of an internet forum for junior doctors are proposing that a further strike be held during the coronation next month.

Ministers held a Cobra meeting last week with Barclay and Oliver Dowden, the Cabinet Office minister, it was reported.

The offer to GPs was posted in an NHS WhatsApp message shared on Twitter. It read: "Local secondary trusts are working hard to identify senior colleagues to support with work rotas during this time. In particular, they are keen to ask GP colleagues who are available without prior commitments to consider shifts at their local emergency departments. Trusts will pay up to £150/hour for daytime hours, £200/hour for night."

Hospitals looking for GP fill-ins included Chelsea and Westminster, Charing Cross, St Mary's and West Middlesex, all in London.

Quince, who has been involved in negotiations with the junior doctors, told The Times: "The NHS is there for you in an emergency situation — call 999 or go to A&E. GPs are open for urgent and emergency care, but we urge people to use services responsibly."

A message on the website for Barts Health NHS Trust read: "We will continue to provide urgent and emergency care and maternity care to people who need it. However, those in less urgent need of care may experience longer waiting times than normal. Please only visit A&E if your condition is life-threatening."

A government source told The Sunday Telegraph last week's Cobra meeting had been "very tense", adding: "There was a lot of concern about the effects the strikes will have and that the BMA picked those dates to have maximum impact on all patients."

Writing in the newspaper, Barclay said he valued the "important work junior doctors do every day" and that he wanted to see a "fair deal that increases their pay". But he added: "I think the public also expects that any deal will be fair to taxpayers. Asking for a rise that is over eight times what the [Office for Budget Responsibility] is forecasting as inflation evidently does not meet that test."

During one conversation on an online doctors' forum, a user wrote: "Announce the next strike for the week of the coronation now."

Up to 250,000 appointments and operations could be postponed because of the strike. Professor Sir Stephen Powis, NHS England national medical director, said he was "very concerned" about the impact on patients, with hospitals facing nearly 100 hours without up to half of their medical workforce. A Whitehall source told the Mail: "The strike poses a significant risk to patient safety and will endanger lives."

Gratitude for striking junior doctors, letters, page 26

NHS 'wasted £60m' fighting death claims

Max Kendix

The NHS spent more than £60 million fighting successful claims for damages from bereaved families last year, The Times can disclose.

A record £160 million was paid out for failures resulting in death, meaning that at least 40 per cent of the money that the NHS allocated for the bereaved families of the victims of negligent care is spent on lawyers.

A select committee report published last year and led by Jeremy Hunt, who is now chancellor, called the clinical negligence system "not fit for purpose".

Joanne Hughes's daughter Jasmine died aged 20 months in February 2011 after failures at two NHS trusts. Hughes, 44, who works to support other bereaved families, said she realised at once something had gone seriously wrong but "there was a clear sense that the NHS was not going to be open with me".

After several years of denying responsibility, the two NHS trusts involved in Jasmine's care offered to settle. Hughes was told that she might be liable for any future costs if she did not accept. "They just chucked money at it hoping it would go away."

Last year the NHS paid £13.4 million of its own legal costs in defending successful claims and £51 million of claimants' costs, on top of £100 million in damages, according to figures obtained by The Times via a freedom of information request to NHS Resolution, which handles claims against the NHS. NHS costs for all clinical negligence claims were estimated to be £13.3 billion in 2021-22, up from £7.9 billion.

The government welcomed the report and said it was assessing it.

Heart attack victims waiting three hours for help

Max Kendix

Patients are facing "fatal delays" in care, doctors have warned, with heart attack patients waiting more than three hours for an ambulance in parts of the country, figures show.

Waits for the highest priority calls, including when patients stop breathing, reached more than half an hour in parts of rural Norfolk last year, compared with the NHS target of seven minutes. In 2019, 75 per cent of postcodes met the 18-minute NHS target for urgent "category 2" calls, which include heart attack and stroke cases. The figure was 8 per cent last year.

Dr Adrian Boyle, president of the Royal College of Emergency Medicine, which represents emergency doctors, said "we run our hospitals too full to function effectively" with long emergency department waits and ambulance response times as a consequence.

The Times has produced a tool to help readers in England compare response times where they live with the national average. The gap between the fastest and slowest response times in postcodes has increased sevenfold, with rural areas affected the most, according to freedom of information data from England's ten ambulance trusts.

The pressure on ambulance services was near-universal. More than 99 per cent of postcodes recorded slower ambulance response times last year.

Chris McCann, campaign director for Healthwatch, the patient watchdog, said public confidence in ambulances had plummeted.

"People die or sustain serious injuries due to delays. We know this has a really bad impact on quality of care," he said.

At least 500 patients died because of slow ambulance response times last year, more than double the recorded deaths in 2021, according to The Guardian. Response times for "category 2 calls" were an hour faster in January than in December but the figures did not improve further in February.



JANE BARLOW/PA



Niesmann +Bischoff motorhomes are popular with Highlands visitors. Nicola Sturgeon met reporters outside her home in Glasgow on Saturday, saying recent events had been "quite traumatic". Below, Peter Murrell was questioned for 11 hours

Motorhome seized from mother-in-law of Sturgeon

Matt Dathan Home Affairs Editor
Mark Smith

A £110,000 motorhome has been seized from outside the home of Nicola Sturgeon's mother-in-law, apparently as part of the Police Scotland investigation into the SNP's finances.

The German-made Niesmann+Bischoff was taken from the home of Margaret Murrell, 92, in Dunfermline on Wednesday. It happened as police searched the home of Sturgeon and her husband, Peter Murrell, the former SNP chief executive, the Scottish Mail on Sunday said.

Murrell had been arrested earlier that day in connection with the investigation into reports of fraud over £600,000 raised to campaign for independence. He was released several hours later pending further inquiries.

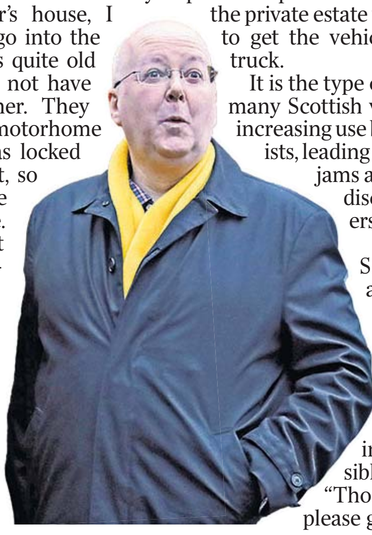
As well as Murrell and Sturgeon's home near Glasgow, officers searched SNP headquarters in Edinburgh and removed boxes of items.

It is not known where the motorhome was taken after being seized and police declined to say how long it would be impounded for. According to the newpaper, police arrived to collect the van at about 9am, with two unmarked cars, an SUV, an estate car and a tow truck. Neighbours said it had been delivered to the house in January 2021 and, as far as they knew, had not moved since.

One witness said: "It happened at about 9am, which is about the time they started raiding Peter's house, I think. They did not go into the house, as Margaret is quite old now and they would not have wanted to disturb her. They couldn't get in to the motorhome at first because it was locked and had clamps on it, so they had to get some keys from somewhere.

"They went off but came back and managed to get it open. Then they loaded it on the back of a huge lorry and, after a bit of trouble securing it, took it away."

Another local resident confirmed that the van had been on the drive since early in January 2021. The newspaper reported that the motorhome was an iSmove, which is made by Niesmann + Bischoff and is advertised for sale at about £110,000.



Police are refusing to comment further on the investigation. A marked police car parked further up the road in the private estate while officers tried to get the vehicle on to the tow truck.

It is the type of vehicle hated by many Scottish voters due to their increasing use by Highlands tourists, leading to rows over traffic jams and piles of rubbish discarded by the owners.

Ian Blackford, the SNP's former leader at Westminster, famously hit out at motorhome owners who drove to the Highlands to escape the Covid pandemic, branding them "irresponsible". He tweeted: "Those in camper vans please go home."

After his arrest, Murrell, who resigned as SNP chief executive in a row over membership numbers, was questioned by detectives for 11 hours. A search of his home was carried out and officers were also seen leaving Gordon Lamb House, the SNP office in Edinburgh, with ten large bags of evidence.

Speaking outside her house on Saturday, Sturgeon said she had not been questioned by police but would fully cooperate with the investigation. The former first minister also said that the past few days had been difficult for her. "As much as there are things I might want to say, I'm not able to do so other than to say that, there will continue to be full co-operation.

"The last few days have been obviously difficult, quite traumatic at times, but I understand that is part of a process. I also understand that I've always accepted the scrutiny that comes on me as a public figure and I never shied away from that."

She said Murrell was at home but "not able to say anything" about his arrest while the inquiry continued. "Again, that's not necessarily a matter of choice. That's just the nature of this."

The Glasgow Southside MSP said she intended to "get on with my life and my job, as you would expect me to".

The investigation into the SNP's finances, named Operation Branchform, is being directed by crown prosecutors in response to complaints that money ringfenced for the independence referendum fund was misappropriated. A £107,620 interest-free personal loan from Murrell to the party in 2021 is said to be in its scope.

Sturgeon announced her resignation seven weeks before the police raids and has repeatedly denied that the investigation had anything to do with her decision. The saga has been described by Mike Russell, president of the SNP, as the party's biggest crisis in 50 years.

Earlier, it emerged that the accountant that audited the SNP's books for more than a decade had resigned. Johnston Carmichael informed the party of the decision before Murrell's arrest.

The SNP treasurer is seeking another auditor to comply with Electoral Commission rules. An SNP spokesman said: "It would not be appropriate to comment on any live police investigation. The SNP has been co-operating fully and will continue to do so."

Vote tactically to beat SNP: Tory leader

Matt Dathan

The leader of the Scottish Conservatives has said that his party should enter into an informal pact with Labour to capitalise on the SNP's crisis and defeat the campaign for independence.

Douglas Ross, the MP for Moray, said Conservative voters should vote Labour at the next general election in seats that are more likely to be won by the party. He said the priority should be removing SNP MPs and keeping the union together, above the success of the Conservative Party.

Ross told The Sunday Telegraph that Tory voters in Scotland should "do what is best for the country" and support "the strongest candidate to beat the SNP" in their constituency. "I will always encourage Scottish Conservative voters to vote Scottish Conservatives, but I think generally the public can see and they want the parties to accept that where there is a strongest candidate to beat the SNP you get behind that candidate."

His words angered the Conservative Party in London, where a spokesman said: "This is emphatically not the view of the Conservative Party. We want people to vote for Conservative candidates wherever they are standing as that's the best way to keep Labour and the SNP out."

Anas Sarwar, the Scottish Labour leader, also rejected the idea of tactical voting, insisting his party would be aiming to win every seat. "This sounds like the Scottish Conservatives are accepting they're going to lose the next general election," he said

The SNP won 48 of the 59 seats in Scotland at the last election. The Conservatives were in second place with six. Labour won one.

Last night Ross insisted he had not meant to encourage Conservative voters to vote for other parties.

He told BBC Scotland: "I urge every Scottish Conservative voter to vote Scottish Conservative and I would always do that.

"But we also know that in many parts of the country, the Scottish Conservatives are the biggest challengers to the SNP so if supporters of other parties unite behind the Scottish Conservative candidate, we have the best possible chance of defeating many SNP MPs."

Scottish Labour opposes Starmer on gender reform

Matt Dathan

The leader of Scottish Labour has told Sir Keir Starmer that the party should allow 16-year-olds to change their gender if he wins the next general election.

Anas Sarwar told The Daily Telegraph that Labour should "learn the lesson from Scotland" by pursuing gender reforms — but over a longer period and protecting single-sex spaces based on biological sex.

That contradicts Starmer in a Sunday Times interview last week when he said: "The lesson from Scotland is that if you can't take the public with you on a journey of reform, then you're probably not on the right journey." Sarwar ordered Labour MSPs in Edinburgh to vote for Scotland's controversial gender recognition reform bill, which would have reduced the minimum age for changing gender to 16.

Starmer has opposed the move, stating that 16-year-olds are too young to change their legally recognised gender.

Scotland's gender reforms have since been blocked by the UK government.

Humza Yousaf, the new first minister, is expected to launch a legal challenge against Westminster's decision to block the legislation.

Nike's creepy ad puts money first and women last, Libby Purves, page 25

News Coronation

After the coronation Charles

The Gold State Coach is lacking in comfort fit for a king but at least the journey is short, writes **Valentine Low**

The King's journey to and from Westminster Abbey next month will be a symbolic marriage of the ancient and the modern.

Charles and Camilla will travel from Buckingham Palace in the air-conditioned comfort of the most up-to-date coach at the royal family's disposal, and return from the abbey in the Gold State Coach, all tradition and splendour but, with its 18th-century suspension, one of the most challenging modes of transport ever endured by a British sovereign.

Buckingham Palace has announced that the couple will travel from the Palace in the King's Procession in the Diamond Jubilee State Coach, which was created for the 60th anniversary of the late Queen Elizabeth's reign in 2012.

But while the use of the Gold State Coach, which was built in 1762 and has featured at every coronation since that of William IV in 1831, reflects the importance of tradition in the ceremony, the Palace has reflected the 21st century by unveiling an emoji of St Edward's Crown that will be used on its Twitter announcements.

The Palace has also disclosed that the procession back from the abbey, the Coronation Procession, will be just one quarter the length of the same procession when Elizabeth was crowned in 1953. The Times has already revealed that the procession, which will involve about 4,000 military personnel, will be about one third the size of what it was for the last coronation.

The procession from the Palace, which will be accompanied by the Sovereign's Escort of the Household Cavalry, will go down the Mall, through Admiralty Arch and along the south side of Trafalgar Square, down Whitehall and round Parliament Square to the Sanctuary of Westminster Abbey, where the service will begin at 11am.

The procession back will take the same route in reverse, a journey of about 1.3 miles. Weighing four tonnes and drawn by eight Windsor Greys, the Gold State Coach has to travel at walking pace, which means that the procession should take about half an hour.

In contrast the 1953 procession took a five-mile route from the abbey back to Buckingham Palace that took in Regent Street, Oxford Street and Park Lane. Stretching over two and a half miles, it was formed of 12,000 military personnel and took 45 minutes to pass each spot.

Even with the shorter distance it will not be an easy journey. While the Diamond Jubilee State Coach has comfortable seats and shock absorbers, the Gold State Coach relies on leather straps for its suspension.

The late Queen used the coach to go both to and from the abbey in 1953, and said in an interview in 2018 that it was "horrible" and "not very comfortable".

Sally Goodsir, curator at the Royal Collection, said of the Gold State Coach, which is made of wood that has been regilded — covered with a thin layer of gold leaf — up to seven times: "Only the sovereign is ever conveyed in this coach, perhaps with their consort. So this is the first opportunity His Majesty has had to travel in this coach."

Martin Oates, 57, the senior coach restorer, has the job of making sure the coach stays stopped when it comes to a halt. As the brake man, a role he took on from his father, he will be walking behind the coach, a job he also performed in the Golden and Platinum Jubilees.

He is now in his 40th year of working at the Royal Mews, following in the footsteps of his grandfather and great grandfather, who both rode in Elizabeth II's coronation procession.

He said: "The point of the brakeman is to make sure the carriage does not roll backwards and forwards. To stop the carriage rolling backwards at the abbey I put the brake on, that is the plan. It's not tricky but it is quite a big vehicle and horses don't always stop when they are meant to."

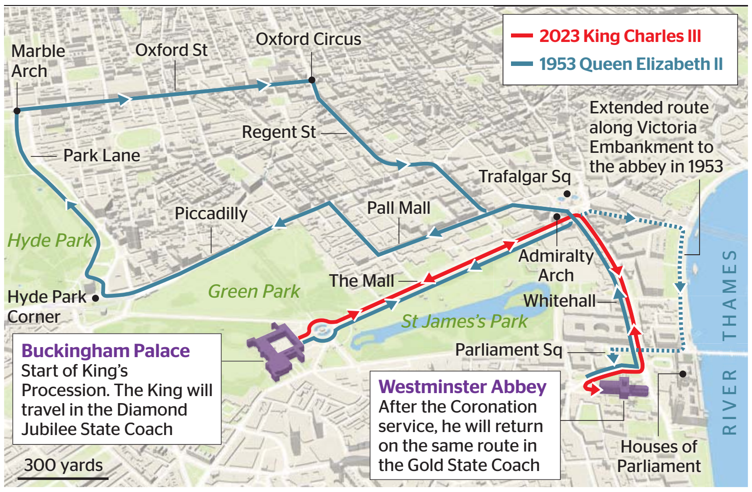
Matthew Powers, 35, the King's head coachman, who will ride postilion, is in charge of safety for the Gold State Coach. He said they used "older, more sensible horses" that had been trained to get used to the noise of the crowds by families in the Royal Mews getting together to make a racket when they returned from exercise. "The whole … community here come out screaming and cheering … with flags and drums and wake up everyone."

He added: "Having eight horses in front is unpredictable, it only takes one horse to mess around and the whole dynamic changes. We have to make sure all eight horses come together and pull off, nice and steady. One horse rears or does something wrong, His Majesty will feel it in the vehicle."

The Coronation Procession, which is much larger than the King's Procession, will include armed forces from across the Commonwealth and the British Overseas Territories, and all services of the British armed forces, alongside the Sovereign's Bodyguard and Royal Watermen.

On their return to Buckingham Palace the King and Queen will receive a royal salute from the armed forces on the west terrace of the garden.

How the routes to the abbey compare









The Diamond Jubilee State Coach, top, and one of its luxurious door panels. The Gold State Coach, right, and St Edward's crown in emoji form



Charles leads the way to his first Easter Sunday church service as King, followed by the Queen, the Princess Royal and Prince Andrew. The service was held at St George's Chapel, where his mother is interred



True blue turn out for King's first Easter service

Prince Louis made his debut at an Easter Sunday church service at which Charles led the royal family at the ceremony for the first time as King. The family overwhelmingly chose blue outfits, but Palace sources suggested that it was a coincidence (Dominic Kennedy writes).

The King followed his mother's tradition of holding Easter Court at Windsor. The ceremony of matins took place in St George's Chapel where the Queen was interred in September. The Duke and Duchess of Sussex were absent.

Easter this year fell on the King and Queen's 18th wedding anniversary and the second

will be in for a rough ride

ZAK HUSSEIN/SPLASHNEWS.COM; SAMIR HUSSEIN/WIREIMAGE/GETTY IMAGES









The younger royals — including Mike and Zara Tindall and Princess Beatrice — arrived in a following group. Zara and the Duchess of Edinburgh, centre, were in pink. The Princess of Wales, Charlotte, Louis and George opted for blue



anniversary of Prince Philip's death.

Prince Louis, aged four, wore blue shorts and a jacket and tie held his mother's hand. The Princess of Wales, in a Catherine Walker coat and matching pillbox hat by Lock & Co, offered a smile and greeting.

Princess Charlotte, in a blue coat and tights, held her father's hand. The Prince of Wales and Prince George both wore blue suits.

The Queen wore a royal blue coat Anna Valentine dress and a Philip Treacy hat with Queen Elizabeth's diamond love knot brooch.

The King and Queen led the royal party. Behind were Prince Andrew and the Princess Royal. Next came the Duke and Duchess of Edinburgh with their son James, the Earl of Wessex. Their daughter, Lady Louise, was absent.

Vice-Admiral Sir Tim Laurence walked with Lady Sarah Chatto and her husband, Daniel. Princess Eugenie and her husband, Jack Brooksbank, followed. Peter Phillips, Princess Anne's son, was there without his daughters.

The Wales family were in a group of younger royals including Princess Beatrice and her husband Edo Mapelli Mozzi, and Mike and Zara Tindall with their eldest children, Mia and Lena.

The party was met by the Dean of Windsor at the Galilee porch for the hour-long service.

The Queen left separately, taking a posy from Harriet, aged ten, from the castle community, saying: "A very, very Happy Easter. What a beautiful day!"

The rest of the royal family were invited to the Deanery for refreshments. First out were the Tindalls. Mike, a former England rugby player, made the small crowd laugh when he said: "You're quiet. What have we done? Happy Easter!" The King was loudly clapped. He smiled and waved.

The Wales family were among the last to depart. Samuel, aged eight, gave a posy to the Princess of Wales.

Charlie Gowans-Eglinton, Times2

Faith leaders wait to hear if they will play a part

Dominic Kennedy, Kaya Burgess

Faith leaders are still waiting to hear if they have been given a formal role in the coronation as Buckingham Palace ponders how far the King can involve other religions.

Church of England sources said there was sensitivity about the depth of inclusiveness in a ceremony at which Charles would be anointed monarch with holy oil.

One faith leader who has met the King many times said: "I think Charles will want people to be involved rather than sit as silent spectators or guests."

Catherine Pepinster, former editor of a Roman Catholic journal, wrote in The Mail on Sunday that "grave tensions between modernisation and tradition explain why the coronation order of service has still not been made public".

Church and royal sources denied any rift. A senior church official involved in planning the ceremony said: "Lambeth Palace and Buckingham Palace are in complete agreement about every aspect of the coronation and we look forward to sharing more details about the service over the coming weeks."

Church sources said that they agreed with the King that the service should reflect and celebrate "who we are as a nation today". There had never been a question of the coronation being anything other than an Anglican service, as it has been for centuries, and church leaders had no need to assert or defend that, one source said.

Another church source said: "The King is very keen to include other faiths, it's just a question of how to do it. One would want to be accommodating. Any role they would play would by its nature be quite minor."

While some Anglicans would consider it "complicated" if, for example, an imam said prayers in a Christian service, minority faith leaders could be given a non-religious role such as reading a poem, the source suggested.

The King has a strong hand over the church because Westminster Abbey is a Royal Peculiar controlled by the monarch rather than being run by an archbishop or diocese.

The annual Commonwealth Day ceremony at the abbey is a feast of many faiths. Prayers were said this year by a Catholic priest and a Methodist minister. Muslim, Sikh, Jewish and Buddhist leaders gave formal blessings.

A faith leader said: "At one time they were thinking of moving the annual Commonwealth service to another church and the Queen said, 'If you do that I won't come because in the abbey we can do these extra things'."

The King's ceremony has already embraced ecumenism. The oil that will be used to anoint Charles, harvested on the Mount of Olives, was blessed by the Greek Orthodox Patriarch of Jerusalem as well as the city's Anglican archbishop. The King has commissioned Greek Orthodox chanting for his crowning. The chief rabbi, Ephraim Mirvis, and his wife Valerie are due to stay with the King and Queen at Clarence House the night before the coronation so they can walk to the abbey without breaking Jewish religious rules forbidding car travel on the sabbath.

Sceptre for Camilla, the ivory queen

The Palace could face criticism from wildlife campaigners over use of a coronation treasure. **Valentine Low** reports

ROYAL COLLECTION TRUST



St Edward's Crown, Queen Mary's Crown and the ivory rod with dove

Queen Camilla has already avoided controversy by choosing not to use a crown embellished with the Koh-i-noor diamond at the coronation.

However, she may find herself facing criticism from wildlife activists instead when she is presented with a sceptre made of ivory at the ceremony at Westminster Abbey next month.

Palace sources have confirmed that Camilla will brandish the ivory rod with dove, which was made for Mary of Modena when she was crowned alongside her husband, James II, in 1685.

There had been speculation that the rod — one of two sceptres used by the Queen at the coronation — would not feature because of sensitivities about the use of ivory.

The Prince of Wales has been a vocal critic of the ivory trade and other illegal wildlife products. William reportedly once said that he would like all the ivory owned by Buckingham Palace to be destroyed.

However, a palace source said that it was inevitable that a collection as old and large as the crown jewels would contain some ivory, reflecting the differing values of a bygone era.

The decision to use the sceptre, which was made by the royal goldsmith Sir Robert Vyner, shows that the palace believes there are times when tradition must take precedence over modern views.

The sceptre, which is about 3ft long, is made of three sections joined by gold collars. Symbolising equity and mercy, it is topped by a dove with folded wings, which represents the Holy Spirit.

Its use was confirmed as part of Buckingham Palace's announcement of the regalia that will be used at the service, from the Sovereign's Ring to St Edward's Crown. They also include the orb, two sceptres, three swords, the armills, the spurs, the coronation spoon and the ampulla.

Experts have admitted that some of the royal treasures are so old that how they became a part of the royal regalia has been lost to memory.

They include the golden St Edward's Staff, which was created by Vyner in 1661 for the coronation of Charles II after the bulk of the previous collection was melted down under Oliver Cromwell, and derives from an earlier staff which was associated with Edward the Confessor. Charles Farris, public historian for the history of the monarchy at Historic Royal Palaces, said: "This is rather an enigmatic object."

He added: "When the crown jewels were remade, Charles II was being advised what he might need. When it came to the staff, no one was quite sure what it was for and they almost didn't have one at all. But Charles II said 'No, I want the full set,' and it was made."

The oldest piece in the collection is the spoon, which is used to hold the oil with which the King is anointed. Made of gold, it probably dates back to the 12th century. Kathryn Jones, senior curator of decorative arts at the Royal Collection Trust, said: "It's the only real great survivor of the mediaeval regalia. Interestingly, like St Edward's Staff we don't know its original purpose. It was listed among the regalia in 1349. But stylistically it dates earlier than that, and may have been supplied to either Henry II or Richard I. It clearly had a ceremonial use, and certainly since the early 17th century it has been used for the purpose of anointing."

When the rest of the regalia was destroyed in 1649, the spoon escaped "because nobody quite understood its purpose", she said. It was sold to a collector who looked after Charles I's wardrobe but when Charles II was restored to the throne, it was returned to the crown.

Another mystery is what the original version of St Edward's Crown looked like. The version with which the King will be crowned dates from 1661. Farris said it replaced an earlier crown said to have belonged to Edward the Confessor. He added: "We don't actually know what it looked like, which is rather remarkable considering it's one of the most famous objects in royal history. But it was said to have been used from at least the reign of King Henry III."









Other regalia include, from left, the coronation spoon, the ampulla, and the orb, held by Queen Elizabeth in 1953

Military-style effort for that farewell royal wave from balcony

Matilda Davies

The Queen made "military-style" arrangements to ensure she could appear on the Buckingham Palace balcony for the Platinum Jubilee without being seen in the wheelchair she had been using, a new royal book claims.

At 96 and in failing health, she "didn't feel strong enough" to attend the celebrations for the Platinum Jubilee weekend last year. However, Prince Charles "implored her to make a massive effort" for the people who had flocked to London to celebrate her 70-year reign and see her "last salute".

The Queen then did her best to join the celebrations. "On her insistence, a military-style exercise was put in place," Robert Jobson claims in his book *Our King*. "In considerable discomfort, Her Majesty was taken by wheelchair to the helicopter pad at Windsor."

The Queen was flown to the Palace and plans were implemented for her to use a wheelchair on landing, although this was shielded from public view. "At the Palace, she was wheeled right up to the balcony doors, then helped to her feet so that she could stand — with the aid of a walking stick — alongside Charles and Camilla, plus William and his family," Jobson writes in his book, an extract of which was published in the Mail on Sunday.

"After a firework display, the Queen smiled with delight. It was her last salute to her people."

Following her balcony appearance on June 2, where she and her family also watched an RAF flypast, the Queen was said to have been in some discomfort. This meant she was unable to attend a thanksgiving service at St Paul's Cathedral the next day.

In a letter to the British people at the end of the weekend's celebrations, she wrote: "While I may not have attended every event in person, my heart has been with you all; and I remain committed to serving you to the best of my ability, supported by my family."

The Queen's dedication to duty also included a meeting with Liz Truss, who then became prime minister, two days before the Palace announced the Queen had "died peacefully" at Balmoral on September 8.

"The Queen's medical advisers and members of her family had advised her to cancel the occasion," the book claims. "But she wouldn't listen. 'It's my job,' she protested. 'Nothing was going to stop her', sources said", although the official meetings with Truss and Boris Johnson, her predecessor, "took an awful lot out of her".

The Palace did not reply to requests for comment.

MENAHEM KAHANA/AFP/GETTY IMAGES



Rabbi Leo Dee, right, with mourners at the funeral of his daughters Maia, above left, and Rina, who were shot on Friday

Thousands mourn British sisters killed in West Bank car shooting

Anshel Pfeffer Jerusalem

Thousands of people attended the funeral of two British sisters who were killed last week in a drive-by shooting in the West Bank.

Rina and Maia Dee, aged 16 and 20, were shot on Friday along with their mother, Lucy, who is critically ill in hospital in Jerusalem.

They were travelling with their mother to a hiking spot when they came under attack. Their father, Rabbi Leo Dee, was in another car with his other children and came across the scene as emergency services arrived. He heard news of the attack before realising that his own family were the victims.

Rabbi Dee, who has a master's in engineering from Cambridge and worked in venture capital before joining the rabbinate, served communities in London and Radlett, Hertfordshire, before moving with his family to Israel in 2014. According to The Times of Israel, he said: "My beautiful, perfect Maia, we named you 'God's water' and you were so many people's friend, flowing between so many different groups.

"You were always an angel; now you will always be our guardian angel." He said of Rina: "You dreamt of travelling the world. Now you're travelling to Heaven. Maia and Rina, you are two flames who have not gone out. You will bring more light to the world. You have inspired and loved us. In return we will love you for ever."

Dee said his wife should have "been the one here eulogising". He added: "She's the boss of the family and I'm just the secretary. We need to focus on what we have, not what we don't. And we still have three wonderful children, with all their lives ahead of them."

The family lived in Efrat, a settlement south of Jerusalem that is home to a large number of other British immigrants. Hundreds of children and their parents lined the streets of Efrat as the sisters' bodies were driven to the cemetery in Kfar Etzion.

In the eulogy Dee mentioned the political controversy that has divided Israel, pitting supporters of the government against opponents of its plans to weaken the country's supreme court. "The Jewish people has proven today that it is one nation," he said. "One quiet family has been ruined and the whole nation is hurting. There's no greater proof of our unity."



Children and their parents lined the streets before the sisters' funeral yesterday

The Israeli army believes the shooting was carried out by two members of a Palestinian militant group based in the occupied West Bank. One was the driver, while the passenger fired on the Dees' vehicle using a Kalashnikov rifle. The gunman continued firing at their car from short range after it was hit and forced off the road.

Security forces from the Palestinian Authority found the vehicle apparently used by the gunmen in the city of Nablus.

Tensions are running high in Israel and the West Bank, where Jews are celebrating Passover and Muslims the month of Ramadan. On Saturday night Israeli security forces changed its policy and did not enter the al-Aqsa mosque at Temple Mount in Jerusalem after hundreds of young Palestinians barricaded themselves inside. They dispersed quietly in the morning.

Scenes of police clashing with youngsters at the mosque earlier in the week had heightened tensions and could have been a factor leading to the fatal attack on the Dee family.

In a separate attack on Friday evening an Arab-Israeli citizen drove his car into a group walking on the Tel Aviv beach promenade, killing an Italian citizen and wounding seven others, including three British tourists.

Binyamin Netanyahu, the prime minister, has ordered the call-up of reserve police officers and military personnel to deal with the escalation in violence. However, members of his government are split on the matter. The police and other security services have urged Netanyahu to close the Temple Mount to Jewish visitors on the last ten days of Ramadan to reduce tensions.

Meanwhile, Itamar Ben-Gvir, the far-right national security minister, who is in charge of the police but at odds with its commanders, said that would represent "surrendering to terror".

On Saturday night there was more shelling and rockets fired at Israel's border communities, which began last Tuesday. Rockets were launched for the first time from Syria, by a Palestinian militia operating under the auspices of the Assad regime. Six rockets were launced in two separate barrages. Four exploded without causing any damage in open areas on the Golan Heights, which are occupied by Israel. One fell short within Syria and a sixth fell in neighbouring Jordan. The Israeli air force attacked the launch sites in retaliation.

Easter knife attack on worshipper

George Sandeman

A man has been arrested after a worshipper was stabbed outside a church following an Easter Sunday service.

The attack took place at St Stephen's Church in Sneinton, Nottinghamshire, with the victim sustaining injuries to his abdomen.

He was taken to hospital where he underwent surgery, according to The Daily Telegraph. His injuries were not thought to be life-threatening.

It was reported that the victim was a regular churchgoer and that the attacker, who had followed him out of the church, had attended only a couple of services there.

The Rev Lynda Blakeley, the curate at St Stephen's, said: "All I can say is that our thoughts and prayers are with everybody affected by this very difficult situation."

Officers from Nottinghamshire police were called to the scene at about 10.50am. They are appealing for witnesses and the suspect remains in custody.

Detective Chief Inspector Mark Dickson said: "Police arrested a 20-year-old man shortly after the incident on suspicion of causing grievous bodily harm with intent and he remains in custody … Despite the large police presence in the area, I'd like to reassure the public that there is no wider threat to the community."

Police name girl, 15, who died in fire

George Sandeman

A teenager who died in a suspected arson attack on a flat in east London has been named by police.

Tiffany Regis, 15, died of smoke inhalation, according to the post-mortem examination. The Metropolitan Police said her family had been told and were being supported by specialist officers.

Five other people at the flat in Beckton were injured but have been discharged from hospital. The fire, which broke out on Thursday evening at a block of flats, is being treated as arson.



Five people were injured in the blaze that killed Tiffany Regis

A 16-year-old boy who was arrested on suspicion of murder was bailed pending further inquiries.

Detective Chief Inspector Joanna Yorke said: "I know that there were a number of young people and residents inside the address before the fire happened and our inquiries are ongoing to identify everyone who was there, not least of all to ensure that everyone is OK.

"We are at the very early stages of our investigation and are still keen to hear from anyone who was present or has any information but has not yet spoken with police. Please get in touch.

"Our priority is to support Tiffany's parents grieving the loss of their child, and all those young people who have lost a dear friend."

New strikes next term could close schools for five days

Emma Yeomans

Every school pupil could miss five days of school next term as teaching unions ballot on strike action after rejecting government pay deals.

The NASUWT became the fourth union to turn down a pay deal and will ballot members again on strikes.

The National Education Union is already planning five days of strikes and Patrick Roach, the NASUWT general secretary, said it would "be looking to co-ordinate wherever we can" on industrial action.He said that the pay offer was "contemptuous" of teachers.

However, he said he would be prepared to "put a positive spin" to members on a future offer, similar to NHS unions' recommendation to its members about a recent pay proposal.

The government has offered teachers in England a £1,000 bonus for this school year and an average 4.5 per cent pay rise next year.

There will be more money for schools to cover 0.5 per cent of the pay rise, having already been allocated £2.3 billion more for this year and next year. However, unions, head teachers and school governors said the money fell far short of what was needed to cover this year's rising costs and pay rise.

The NASUWT's strike ballot in January failed to meet the turnout threshold for strike action. However, its latest consultative ballot met the threshold with 52.4 per cent of the 130,000 eligible members voting, of which 77 per cent said they would vote to strike.

Roach said: "You have to be pragmatic. It's always about finding a deal, which actually your members can support and my appeal to Gillian Keegan [education secretary] is to negotiate for a deal which actually will command the support of the profession."

Discussing the negotiations, he said the government could have gone further on the package it offered, including non-pay announcements on workload, but that his union was prepared to make compromises. "I'd be prepared to put a positive spin on it. Why wouldn't we go into negotiations in good faith and with integrity?"

Head teachers in the north of England have urged Ofqual to mark summer exams more generously in light of the strikes, after several years of adapting their mark schemes to the impact of Covid. The NASUWT is also calling for a limit on teachers' hours to ease fears that burnout and overwork is pushing many out of the profession.

Roach said: "Teacher morale is so low the government refuses to collect the statistical data to track the extent of the problem. But we do. And it confirms that 73 per cent are seriously considering quitting and won't recommend teaching as a career to others."

A Department of Education spokesman said: "After costing children almost a week of time in the classroom and with exams fast approaching, it is extremely disappointing that unions are reballoting for more strike action."

● Last night a Labour spokesman said the party's proposal to remove VAT exemptions on private schools "would not apply for children with a special educational need" if their places were allocated on the basis of a local authority education and healthcare plan.



LESLEY MARTIN/PA



Joy of spring A month-old Shire horse foal, Waterfall Duke of Diamonds, steps into a field for the first time with Marianne Burton, in Compton Dundon, Somerset

£3 million crackdown on illegal under-18 vape sales

Jonathan Ames Legal Editor

Ministers are to launch "enforcement squads" as part of a £3 million crackdown on the illegal sale of e-cigarettes to children.

Trading Standards officers will lead the new teams as they stage undercover purchasing missions at corner grocers and vape shops across England.

The teams will assess whether shops are selling vapes to under-18s and have the power to remove illegal products.

Neil O'Brien, the health minister, will announce the measures in a speech tomorrow at the think tank Policy Exchange.

He is also expected to launch a consultation to identify wider methods of reducing access to vapes by children while ensuring that products remain available to adult smokers.

It is understood that health ministers view vapes as a useful tool to reduce smoking but there remain concerns. The consultation will probably explore issues such as the marketing and promotion of vapes and the environmental impact of disposable products.

"Our priority is to prevent people smoking and support them to quit," O'Brien said. He confirmed that the government aimed for the UK to be "smoke-free" — meaning a smoking rate of below 5 per cent of the population — within seven years.

The minister emphasised that "while vaping is a preferable alternative to smoking for adults, we are concerned about the rise in youth vaping". He added that the enforcement squad would "clamp down on those businesses who sell vapes to children — which is illegal — and get them hooked on nicotine".

Official figures published last September showed 8.6 per cent of those aged between 11 and 18 in England were occasional or regular vapers, up from 4.8 per cent in 2020. They also showed the use of disposable vaping products had increased significantly, with 53 per cent of vapers using them last year, compared with 5 per cent in 2020.

Attenborough joins scientists to reveal huge sea predator

Jack Malvern

Sir David Attenborough, perhaps the friendliest face in broadcasting, is to meet one of the scariest monsters in a new hour-long programme on the BBC.

The presenter and occasional fossil collector will reveal the discovery of a fossilised pliosaur with a skull the size of a single bed and teeth like daggers.

Attenborough, 96, will present the programme, provisionally titled *Attenborough and the Giant Sea Monster*, later this year.

"Pliosaurs were the biggest and most formidable hunters in the Jurassic seas — the marine equivalent, you might say, of *Tyrannosaurus rex*," he said. "The skull of this one is over two metres long and armed with massive fangs.

"Frustratingly, skulls, which can tell us most about an animal, are only too easily smashed before fossilisation, but this one is virtually undamaged and promises to reveal all kinds of new details about these terrifying hunters that preyed on Lyme Regis's better-known ichthyosaurs."

Attenborough has previously spoken of his enthusiasm for the fossils of the Jurassic coast in Dorset in *Attenborough and the Sea Dragon*, first broadcast in January 2018.

The earlier programme followed palaeontologists unearthing a new species of ichthyosaur, showing for the first time that the marine reptiles had darker skin on their upper side than their bellies, similar to great white sharks. The colouring failed to protect the specimen from a larger predator, which bit its head clean off. Attenborough owns a small ichthyosaur fossil that he keeps at his home. In the new film Attenborough is joined by scientists and palaeontologists as they work to better understand the predator, which fossil experts believe to be a new pliosaur species.

The discovery of the skull will aid the team in working out how the creature looked and behaved, as well as help them understand its hunting methods.

The BBC said the documentary, filmed on location around the country, "will combine groundbreaking science with gripping storytelling and state-of-the-art CGI to tell the tale of this most phenomenal predator of the Jurassic world".

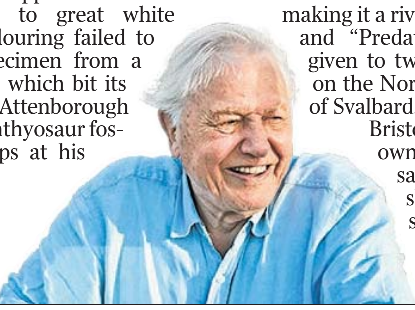
Jack Bootle, head of specialist factual commissioning, said: "David has filmed some of the world's very best fossil animals, so the fact he's so interested in this skull makes me unbelievably excited. This film promises to be a thrilling trip through time to a moment when monsters ruled the seas around Britain. I can't wait for viewers to experience it."

Mike Gunton, the programme's executive producer, said: "It's wonderful to be back on location with David. His eyes absolutely lit up when we told him about this amazing find. He couldn't wait to join the dig and get a first look at the fossil bones for himself."

Pliosaurs were first identified in the 19th century and one of the largest was found in Dorset in 2009, when a local collector found a head 2.4m long.

Scientists estimated that its body would have been up to 16m in length, making it a rival to "The Monster" and "Predator X", nicknames given to two specimens found on the Norwegian archipelago of Svalbard.

Bristol Museum, which owns an 8m-long pliosaur found in Wiltshire in 1994, gave its specimens specimen the less threatening name of Doris.



Sir David Attenborough "couldn't wait" to join the dig



Jamie Oliver has a second helping of marriage vows

Jamie Oliver and his wife Jools have renewed their vows in a "special, funny and romantic" ceremony at a luxury resort in the Maldives (Peter Chappell writes).

The television chef and his wife, a former model, who met when they were 17 and 18, got married 23 years ago and have five children together.

Oliver, 47, shared photos of the ceremony and wrote that "after 23 years together, we thought it would be a special moment to celebrate renewing our wedding vows before the kids all start leaving the nest. It was really special, funny and romantic with the words in the ceremony making more sense having come this far together."

He continued: "It seems like a blink since the first wedding which we kept very private apart from the paparazzi at the village church, we thought it would be a happy and joyful moment to share with you all this Easter.

"We've always dreamed of going to the Maldives and it was just as you would have dreamed, simply amazing!"

The first photo in the post showed Oliver and Jools, 48, holding hands and dancing on the beach while barefoot. Their children, Poppy, 21, Daisy, 20 today, Petal, 14, Buddy, 12, and River, 6, stood alongside them in the photos.

Jools also shared the same images, writing: "So wonderful the first time we did it again. What an incredible memory to treasure, so happy, emotional, romantic and beautiful. Seeing the children's little faces made the whole experience so special."

In one photo Oliver is kissing his wife while his children cheer, and another shows one of his daughters presenting her parents with a bouquet of white flowers.

Famous friends who congratulated them in comments on their posts included Gary Barlow, Dermot O'Leary and Daisy Lowe.





The TV chef and his wife, Jools, had a "joyful" ceremony in the Maldives with their children. Left, their wedding in 2000

Complaints about non-surgical cosmetic work hit record high

Charlotte Wace

Campaigners received a record number of complaints about non-surgical cosmetic procedures last year, raising fears over how the public will be protected during the period before new licensing is implemented.

Calls made by MPs to speed up the introduction of the regime, which would standardise procedures such as botulinum toxin injections and dermal fillers, and make practising without a license an offence, were rejected in February by the Department of Health and Social Care (DHSC).

There are now fears that the scheme could take up to three years to implement, during which people will continue to be put at risk.

Save Face, a national register of accredited practitioners who campaign for improved safety standards, said it received 2,824 complaints last year regarding unregistered practitioners. The figures, which cover reported complications from treatments, are up from 2,436 in 2021 and 2,083 in 2020.

Dermal fillers made up 69 per cent of the complaints last year, followed by botulinum toxin injections, of which the best-known brand is Botox.

Ashton Collins, director of Save Face, said calls by the Commons' health and social care committee for the government to introduce a licensing regime by July 2023 had been unrealistic. But she urged the government to do more in the meantime to protect people.

She said they "could be putting out a proper awareness campaign to anybody thinking of having these treatments", or make malpractice insurance mandatory at all premises.

Professor David Sines, executive chairman of the Joint Council for Cosmetic Practitioners, agreed that the July deadline was too soon, given the amount of work required. The government had given the 2023 deadline for agreeing procedures of the licensing scheme and communicating a plan for delivery.

"It was always going to take two very busy years to get the standards written and organisational readiness to be in place, for scrutiny and governance to be put in place to drive the licence," Sines said. This would mean the licensing regime coming into place in 2025. But he had heard from other stakeholders it could take "up to three years", which he found concerning. Sines added: "People won't even be starting the journey to improve and enhance the standards of their work until they get that very clear and defined message."

Collins said the laws currently in place were not always enforced. "If any new laws are going to be treated in the same way as the current laws that regulate the sector, it's pointless," she said.

Save Face hears dozens of cases every month where clients have not had a face-to-face appointment with a registered prescriber before having botulinum injections, which is a legal requirement. Collins was also aware of a case where filler treatments were illegally offered to a client under 18, and was not investigated after being reported.

There were fewer complaints about practitioners using unlicensed botulinum toxin injections after The Times published an undercover investigation last year detailing how illegal products were being used to cut costs.

The organisation came across a woman who suffered dire complications after anti-wrinkle injections with suspected unlicensed products. The woman is said to have suffered deep-seated infections that had "eaten away at her tissue and nerves", leading her to require multiple surgeries "to have half her face removed", Collins said.

This week The Times found multiple examples of unlicensed botulinum toxin products marketed online. Exclusive Pharmacy, a Kent-based company, is openly advertising Botulax, a legal product in some countries but illegal for use in the UK. Reviews on its social media page include: "I have been using Botulax for two years and I would not use anything else. I can afford to undercut the other clinics in my area."

Other companies are offering treatment from as little as £50 for enough botulinum injections to treat three areas — significantly less than the raw cost of any licenced product.

Carolyn Harris, Labour's co-chair of the all-party parliamentary group on beauty and wellbeing, called for swift action from the government. She said if such treatments were not properly governed, "it's potentially life-threatening". She added: "Currently it's the wild west and will continue to be the wild west."

A DHSC spokesperson said: "This is a complex area and requires in-depth and extensive engagement with industry experts and the public."

News

Find space for 25,000 migrants, officials told

Matt Dathan Home Affairs Editor

Home Office officials have been ordered to find accommodation for at least 25,000 migrants from a list of disused Crown properties. They are looking at properties and land of all sizes on an internal government portal that lists available sites.

They range from properties that could accommodate a few dozen asylum seekers to large-scale sites that could house more than 2,000. Officials have been told to look for places that can also accommodate families with young children.

The four sites that have been announced so far, which include a barge in Dorset and former military sites, will house only single, adult, male migrants.

The online portal, which can be accessed only by civil servants and ministers above a certain security clearance, includes a list of about 120 Ministry of Defence sites due for disposal over the coming years.

The list, obtained by The Times, includes properties from across the UK. One of the largest is St George's Barracks in the Rutland village of North Luffenham, which is due for closure in 2026 and could provide accommodation for about 2,200 migrants.

It also includes former military accommodation at a site in Feltham, west London, that could provide accommodation for 800 and the disused Forthside Barracks in Stirling, which could house about 350, according to the list. The Kinnegar Logistics Base, a military site in Co Down, could accommodate 500 migrants.

There are also plans to pay a Hull company called Payman Holdings to build cheap modular units, which are prefabricated buildings constructed off site and then delivered to be installed within a day.

A Home Office source blamed the exercise on the soaring asylum backlog and on ministers for panicking, and said: "It feels like a desperate scramble to find any alternative accommodation, as ministers are increasingly frustrated about having to keep using hotels because the backlog in asylum cases remains stubbornly high."



Northop Hall country hotel was chosen to house up to 150 migrants

One of the locations earmarked for a two-storey installation of the modular units to accommodate about 250 migrants is in the small north Wales village of Northop Hall, along with housing for up to 150 more in a country hotel. The proposals would increase the population of the village by a third.

Ministers have set a target of acquiring or leasing enough property from the list to accommodate at least 25,000 migrants, government sources have said. The pressure to find accommodation continues to rise as Channel migrant crossings resumed over the past week owing to warmer weather and calmer conditions at sea. Over the past seven days, 877 migrants have arrived on small boats, taking the total for this year to 4,670.

Last week the Home Office announced four new sites to accommodate up to 5,406. A maximum of 506 migrants will be housed on a barge at Portland Port in Dorset for 18 months; up to 2,000 will be placed at RAF Scampton in Lincolnshire; 1,700 at the MoD site of Wethersfield in Braintree, Essex; and 1,200 will be moved into the site of an old prison at Northeye, near Bexhill-on-Sea in East Sussex, by the end of the year. All four sites face the prospect of legal action from local councils.

Robert Jenrick, the immigration minister, announced that a fifth site, at the Catterick Garrison barracks in Rishi Sunak's North Yorkshire constituency of Richmond, is also due to be used but the Home Office has yet to confirm when or how many people will be housed there.

Home Office officials have been told to find 25,000 places from the government's existing estate as part of efforts to move more than 51,000 migrants out of hotels, which is costing the taxpayer more than £6 million per day. Nearly 400 hotels are being used to accommodate asylum seekers.

The Times can also disclose that despite Sunak's pledge to end the use of hotels to accommodate migrants, a hotel four miles from his constituency home in the town of Northallerton began accommodating asylum seekers last week.

However, the Home Office will face big logistical, legal and financial challenges to leasing and opening the sites. One source said that the MoD was charging the Home Office "a fortune" for the use of RAF sites.

The Home Office paid a multimillion-pound bill to Serco, the private contractor, after the department was forced to drop plans to house migrants at RAF Linton-on-Ouse last summer. The MoD withdrew its offer for the Home Office to use the site in August, after a contract with Serco had been signed, government sources said.

The Sun on Sunday reported that only 215 of more than 45,000 migrants who arrived in the UK via small boats have since been deported. A Home Office spokesman said: "The Home Office is committed to making every effort to reduce hotel use and limit the burden on the taxpayer."



*Excludes white and pure brilliant white emulsion, ready mixed tester pots and products sold and shipped by verified sellers on diy.com. Subject to availability. Prices may vary in B&Q Local stores. The value of every third item per single transaction in descending price order deducted. Ends 17 April. See diy.com.

Labour to bar foreign scam callers using UK numbers

Matt Dathan

Foreign fraudsters targeting people in the UK with scam calls would be barred from using phone networks in Britain under plans announced by Labour.

The BBC series *Scam Interceptors* revealed last year that the majority of fraud in the UK was being perpetrated from industrial-sized scamming call centres in Asia.

They use "spoofing" services that allow companies based overseas to use UK phone numbers to make it appear as though they are calling from Britain.

Ofcom has announced a crackdown that will require network providers to identify numbers that do not uniquely identify the caller and then block the calls.

However, the rules will not prevent scammers continuing to buy up legitimate UK numbers that are "in service".

Emily Thornberry, shadow attorney general, will today announce that Labour would go further by introducing "the most stringent controls possible" against scam calls from overseas to close the remaining loopholes.

Under the party's plans, no phone call made from overseas using a UK number would be able to have that number displayed when it appeared on a UK mobile phone or landline. Recipients would be able to tell whether it was a call being made from abroad.

Secondly, it would block all calls from overseas using a UK number unless the network provider can ascertain that the user is on a roaming tariff — ensuring the account making the call is paying for the cost and not the recipient.

The policy is designed to tackle soaring cases of fraud. The Office for National Statistics crime survey showed that there were 3.6 million fraud cases in the year to September, equivalent to 300,000 a month, or 10,000 per day.

Ofcom research has also revealed that 45 million people were targeted by scam calls in the summer of 2021.

The watchdog's findings showed that 82 per cent of mobile phone users and 79 per cent of landline users said that they would usually or always check the number calling their phone before deciding whether to answer.

Six in ten people were unlikely to answer an international number that they did not recognise, and four in ten said likewise where the number was withheld, but that figure fell to one in four if they were being called by an unrecognised UK mobile or landline number.

Thornberry said: "In this way, we can make it not just more difficult for overseas gangs to continue using UK numbers for their scams, but near impossible. This would be just one step of the many we need to take to tackle Britain's fraud crisis."

The Home Office is expected to announce a new fraud strategy in the next month.

SU WRIGHT/STORY PICTURE AGENCY







A surfer battles the waves in Cornwall, beachgoers flock to Durdle Door in Dorset and it is perfect for punting in Canterbury over the Easter break

Easter sunshine to be blasted away by gales and blustery showers

Sunseekers made the most of a taste of spring, flocking to parks and beaches before the warm spell comes to an end today (Peter Chappell writes).

Temperatures on Easter Sunday had been expected to top this year's highest so far of 17.8C but instead fell short. A temperature of 17.3C was registered in Chertsey, Surrey, just shy of the high recorded in Santon Downham, Suffolk, on March 30.

Despite this, the UK was still hotter than Rome, where it was 16C for the second day in a row. The warm dry weather won't last long, however. It is due to be blasted away by gales in the south later this week, the Met Office said. A band of rain drifting across the Irish Sea is expected to bring blustery showers to much of the UK today, with a risk of hail and thunderstorms in places.

Brief sunny spells will break through the clouds in many areas. Temperatures are unlikely to climb above 15C and will cool even further tomorrow and Wednesday.

A yellow warning for wind is in effect from 3pm tomorrow until 6am on Wednesday across the South West, Wales, the Lake District, the east coast of Northern Ireland and Dumfries and Galloway in Scotland. Gusts could exceed 60mph.

Weather, page 45

Slavery fund spurred 'by Christ, not guilt'

David Sanderson
Philip Willan Rome

GARETH FULLER/PA



Justin Welby with Easter worshippers. Below, the Pope in Rome



The Archbishop of Canterbury has said that it is the "living presence of Christ" and not colonial guilt that compelled the Church of England to set up a £100 million fund to help those affected by its historical profit from slavery.

In his Easter message, the Most Rev Justin Welby said he had received a "large" number of complaints over the Church Commissioners' decision to set up the fund, which would help those affected by their predecessors' investment in, and ownership of, slaves.

"The living reality of Christ compels us to consider and respond to those actions that deny the reality of God's power and love," the archbishop said of the commissioners' decision. "It's not post-colonial guilt, it is the living presence of Christ, alive in our church and in our lives, who treats us all, high and low, important and unknown, exactly the same. And in the past, slave and free. And today," he said.

In his sermon at Canterbury Cathedral, Welby, 67, paid tribute to the courage that led to the Good Friday agreement in 1998 and the more recent Windsor framework on Brexit. He said the Good Friday deal, which led to the majority of paramilitaries in Northern Ireland dropping their weapons and the introduction of political power-sharing, had been because of the "extraordinary and courageous work of so many men and women involved in reaching it".

The framework, pushed by Rishi Sunak this year to replace the North Ireland protocol with the European Union, had also taken "political courage", the archbishop said

He added: "The courage was a reminder that reconciliation and peace are not one-off events but long journeys requiring determination, stamina and faith. And indeed, it was churches and monasteries — compelled by the living Christ — who spent years before 1998, secretly at huge risk, building the bridges that opened the way for the first ceasefires and considerations of peace."

Turning to world affairs, Welby said: "We do not lose heart but we pray and we work for Ukraine and Russia; for Israel and Palestine, with the recent tragedies especially, and for the other so often forgotten struggles of our world knowing that because of the resurrection, peace, true peace, is no aimless daydream, but is a reality offered because Christ was raised from the dead," he said.

His message was echoed in Vatican City, where a frail Pope led Easter Mass in St Peter's Square and renewed his calls for peace. He prayed that God would help the Ukrainian people on the path towards peace and "shine the light of Easter on the Russian people", which has been interpreted as a call to Russians to consider their part in the 13-month war.

Francis, 86, was discharged from hospital a week ago after three days of treatment for bronchitis. He presided over Mass in St Peter's Square but delegated Cardinal Giovanni Battista Re, 89, dean of the college of cardinals, to celebrate at the altar so that he could keep walking and standing to a minimum.

The Pope, who has painful arthritis in his right knee, was in a wheelchair before he greeted about 100,000 tourists and the faithful in a tour of St Peter's Square after the service.

He appeared in good spirits as he saluted the crowd and paused to chat to cardinals on the steps of the basilica, which was bedecked with 35,000 flowers from the Netherlands.

It was his first Easter Mass since the death in December of his predecessor, Pope Benedict XVI.

John Allen, editor of the Catholic news agency Crux Now, wrote: "The stamina Francis has displayed this week, skipping only Friday evening's Via Crucis celebration due to unseasonably cold weather in Rome and otherwise displaying strong form during lengthy and demanding liturgies, has gone a long way to quiet talk of a fin du régime climate within the Vatican."

As is usual in his Urbi et Orbi message, Francis reviewed conflicts around the globe, praying for dialogue between Israelis and Palestinians and expressing concern at violence in Jerusalem, "witness to Christ's resurrection".

He prayed for peace in the Middle East and Africa and for "the victims of international terrorism, especially in Burkina Faso, Mali, Mozambique and Nigeria". The Pope mentioned Syria, still awaiting peace, and prayed for earthquake victims there and in neighbouring Turkey, saying that international solidarity was still required.

He recalled the plight of Christians in Nicaragua and Eritrea and prayed for all those prevented from professing their faith freely and publicly.

More vicars are crucial if the Church is to revive, Thunderer, page 24

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Boy, 14, keeps his head above sand to stay alive while trapped in hole

George Sandeman

A teenager who became trapped up to his neck in sand after the hole he dug collapsed in on him was lucky not to have been buried alive, his rescuers have said.

The 14-year-old was visiting Anderby Creek in Lincolnshire, ten miles north of Skegness, with his family on Saturday when he became trapped at about 12.45pm.

The hole he was digging collapsed in on him while he was standing in it and only his head remained above the surface.

His parents were able to maintain an airflow and keep him breathing by scooping sand away from his mouth.

They then called for help and were aided by members of the coastguard rescue teams based in Skegness and Mablethorpe.

The local fire crew, the police and East Midlands Ambulance Service were also sent to the scene. Rescuers spent an hour digging the boy out of the hole before he was checked by paramedics and released.

Fran Wilkins, a senior coastal operations officer for HM Coastguard, said: "What happens as you disturb the sand, there's a high likelihood of it collapsing back in and the priority was to make sure that at all times his airway was protected and his head remained above the sand.

"It needed lots of people in a co-ordinated effort to remove the sand in a way that we could get him out of the hole as quickly and as safely as possible."

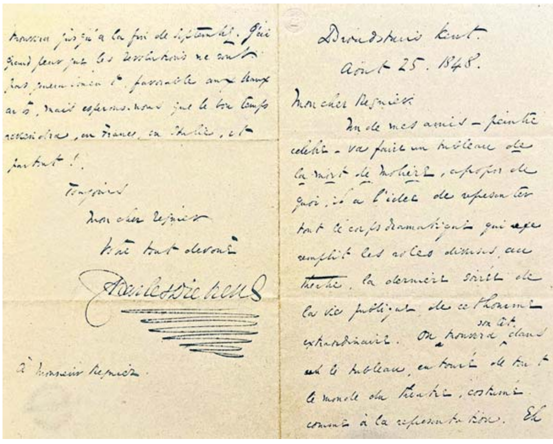
She added: "Luckily he did remain calm throughout, which definitely helped reduce the panic and allowed everyone to get to work and do their job."

Wilkins also praised the boy's parents for keeping the sand out of his mouth and quickly calling for help.

"There's that instinct to keep trying to dig, but the more you disturb and weaken the sand that has collapsed in, you're potentially going to create a much bigger hole," she said.

"They kept his head clear and his mouth and nose free so he could breathe and waited for more help which was really important for him."

Lucy Hicks, a senior maritime operations officer for HM Coastguard, told Lincolnshire Live: "The teenager was extremely lucky. If the tide had been coming in or the hole was just a little bit larger there could have been a very different outcome."


... jusqu'à la fin de septembre. J'ai grand peur que les révolutions ne sont pas [illegible] favorable aux beaux arts, mais espérons-nous que le bon temps reviendra, en France, en Italie, et partout!

Toujours
Mon cher Regnier
Votre tout dévoué
Charles Dickens

À Monsieur Regnier.

Devonshire Terrace.
Août 25. 1848.
Mon cher Regnier
Un de mes amis – peintre célèbre – va faire un tableau de la mort de Molière, à propos de quoi il a l'idée de représenter tout le corps dramatique qui remplit les rôles divers au théâtre, la dernière soirée de la vie publique de cet homme extraordinaire. On montrera son lit dans le tableau, entouré de tout le monde du théâtre, costumé comme à la représentation. Eh

Charles Dickens wrote to the actor François Regnier asking about the French playwright Molière, below, on behalf of an artist friend who was working on a depiction of Molière's death

BETTMANN ARCHIVE/GETTY IMAGES



Dickens letter hints at mystery Molière painting

Jack Malvern

The discovery of a previously unknown letter by Charles Dickens has set off a hunt for a valuable missing painting that the author helped to create.

In a handwritten note in schoolboy French, Dickens describes how an artist friend is working on a dramatic depiction of the death of the playwright Molière but wishes to have more information to make the work accurate.

Although Dickens does not name the artist, it is likely to be either of his friends Charles Robert Leslie or William Powell Frith, two Victorian narrative painters who depicted other aspects of the French playwright's work.

Dr Leon Litvack, a Dickens scholar at Queen's University Belfast, suggested that the missing painting could be worth "hundreds of thousands of pounds" given its connection to the author.

Litvack said: "Both Leslie and Frith painted scenes from Molière's plays, and both are obvious candidates, although there is no record of a painting of the death of the playwright in their catalogues or in the records of the Royal Academy exhibitions for 1849 and 1850."

Dickens was an established author when he wrote to his friend François Regnier, an actor, on August 25, 1848. Dickens had published *Oliver Twist* and *A Christmas Carol* and would soon begin work on *David Copperfield*.

"My dear Regnier," he wrote. "One of my friends — a famous painter — is going to paint a tableau of the death of Molière, in connection with which, he has the idea of representing the whole dramatic body who fill the various roles at the theatre, on the last evening of the public life of this extraordinary man."



Molière, whose plays in the 17th century set the template for modern French comedy, collapsed on stage on February 17, 1673, while performing *Le Malade Imaginaire (The Imaginary Invalid)*, his final play. He died at home shortly afterwards.

Dickens said that his friend would depict Molière in his deathbed "surrounded by everyone from the theatre, costumed as at the performance".

The letter, which is estimated to fetch up to $4,500 when it is auctioned by Lion Heart Autographs in New York on May 10, continues: "Well, my dear man, there is no one who understands the genius of Molière as well as you, and there is no one, I believe, who is better acquainted with all of the authorities on the subject. Kindly tell me whether there are any books or portraits that can be found in England, which one can trust."

Litvack, who authenticated the letter in his role as editor of the Charles Dickens Letters Project, said that the painting was likely to be languishing unrecognised at someone's home.

"Paintings are lost over time. The letter is specific enough about what the unnamed artist is requesting that I think the painting was executed."

Litvack added that Dickens was clearly a confident French speaker.

"The letter is an interesting demonstration of the author's command of French, which was pretty good, though he got some things wrong — particularly the placement of accents. He was clearly better at spoken French than written French," he said.

Dickens was a frequent visitor to France, and he rented a house near Boulogne for his lover Ellen Ternan.

Dickens is not known to have commented on the finished painting.

Church gives back Somme cross at last

Matilda Davies

A crucifix brought to England after the Battle of the Somme will be returned in June to the French town it came from.

The 56cm oak cross has been in All Saints Church in Tinwell, Rutland, since a British Army chaplain is believed to have taken it from the rubble of Doingt, 30 miles east of Amiens in northern France. The church of Doingt-Flamicourt was destroyed in the First World War, along with the rest of the town.

June Dodkin, a former All Saints church warden, said the idea came from Jonno McDevitt, 16, who was in the congregation on Remembrance Day in 2018. The priest talked about the crucifix, and McDevitt asked: "Shouldn't we send it back?", the BBC reported.

Dodkin said the parishioners had not been aware that Doingt town and the church that once housed the cross had been rebuilt. When they discovered it had, emails were exchanged with the mayor to orchestrate the crucifix's return, 107 years after the Somme.

The Diocese of Peterborough granted special permission for the artefact — which includes a gold figure of Jesus on the cross — to be sent back. The plan was delayed by the pandemic and will go ahead in June, with ten representatives of the Rutland church transporting the cross.

The Rev Olwen Woolcock, priest-in-charge of the Ketton and Tinwell parishes, said: "The visit to Doingt is going to take place this summer and the crucifix will be returned to where it belongs.

"It is a symbol of hope and the promise of new life — a village once destroyed is rebuilt; where there was trauma and death, today there is life and community."

Woolcock believes that Parson Percy Hooson brought the crucifix to Rutland. He served as a chaplain during the Somme in 1916 before taking up a post at Tinwell 16 years later. A worshipper at the church said that Hooson found it and brought it to England, where he placed it on the church altar.

Wizz Air lands title of having Britain's worst flight delays … again

Wizz Air was the worst airline for flight delays from British airports for the second year in a row, an investigation has found.

The Hungarian carrier's departures were an average of 46 minutes and six seconds behind schedule last year, according to analysis of Civil Aviation Authority (CAA) data by the PA news agency.

That was more than three times longer than the previous year, when it was also ranked last for punctuality.

The consumer group Which? described the figures as "worrying" and said they demonstrated the need for the CAA to be given tougher powers.

Wizz Air operates short-haul flights from eight UK airports, including Birmingham, Edinburgh, Gatwick and Luton. Tui recorded the second-worst punctuality, with an average delay of 40 minutes and 18 seconds. It was followed by Qatar Airways (31 minutes and 48 seconds), Turkish Airlines (29 minutes and 30 seconds) and Pegasus Airlines (27 minutes and 18 seconds).

Norwegian Air Shuttle recorded the best performance, with an average delay of 13 minutes and 42 seconds.

The analysis took into account all scheduled and chartered departures from UK airports by airlines with more than 2,500 flights. Cancelled flights were not included. The average delay for all flights was 23 minutes.

May and June were the worst months for punctuality because the aviation sector had failed to recruit and train enough staff to cope with a surge in demand for holidays after the ending of pandemic restrictions.

Rory Boland, editor of the magazine Which? Travel, said: "These figures are worrying, but will be no surprise to passengers who've had to endure shoddy treatment from airlines for years.

"With a regulator still lacking the appropriate powers to punish airlines who break the law, including withholding refunds, it is difficult to escape the conclusion that some carriers are simply getting away with leaving passengers high and dry."

He said the CAA should be given effective powers to clamp down on poor airline behaviour, including the ability to hand out hefty fines.

Paul Smith, the CAA consumer director, said "too many passengers faced disappointing levels of delays" last year.

A spokesman for the trade body Airlines UK said: "The whole industry knows how important punctuality is for customers. Last year was not representative due to the late unwinding of Covid restrictions, which required a very steep ramp-up."

Wizz Air did not respond to a request for comment.

Modi 'erasing Muslim past from textbooks'

A group of 250 Indian historians are protesting at the rewriting of history textbooks to conform to what they describe as the ruling party's ideological bias (Amrit Dhillon writes).

They said deleting sections on topics including India's Muslim rulers was part of the Narendra Modi government's "partisan agenda".

History is at the heart of India's culture wars with politicians still arguing over figures from the past. For the ruling Hindu nationalist Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) the most glorious period is that of ancient Hindu India.

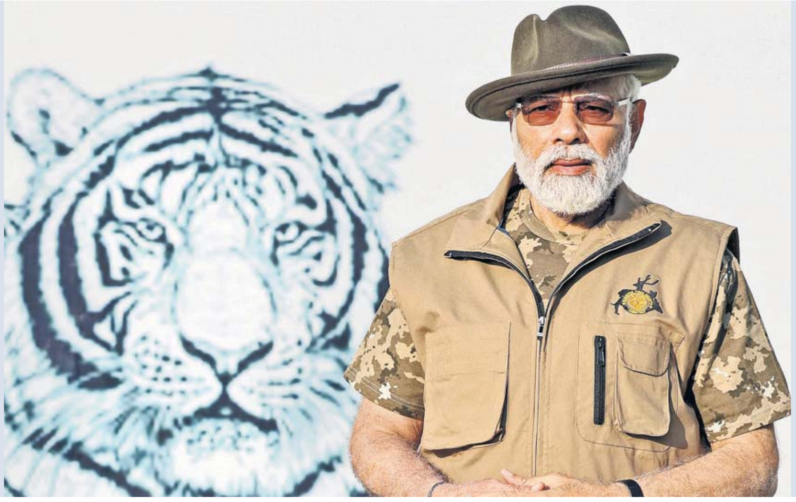
However, it reviles the time from the 16th to the 19th century when India was ruled by Muslim Mughals.

Nationalists abhor them as "oppressors", even though most were born and are buried in India. Earlier chapters on the Mughals have been erased from new editions of history and political science textbooks for secondary schools issued by the National Council of Educational Research and Training.

According to The Indian Express newspaper, mention of the deadly 2002 riots in Gujarat, which took place when Modi governed the state, has also vanished.

The ostensible reason proffered for the rewriting was that schoolchildren had lost a lot of time because of the pandemic and truncated textbooks were a way to lighten their load.

PIB/AFP VIA GETTY IMAGES



Narendra Modi poses for pictures at a tiger reserve in southwest India yesterday



India halts UK trade talks over Sikh extremists

Matt Dathan Home Affairs Editor
George Grylls Defence Correspondent

India has stalled trade negotiations after accusing Britain of failing to condemn a Sikh extremist group that attacked the Indian high commission in London last month.

Supporters of the Khalistan movement, which calls for a secession state in the Punjab, injured two security guards and broke windows at the building in during a protest on March 20.

The UK government has condemned the attack, but the Indian government wants it to go further and publicly condemn the group, whose figurehead is Amritpal Singh.

Senior British government sources have said that the Indian government has "disengaged" from trade talks and made it clear that there would be no progress without a public condemnation of the Khalistan movement.

After the latest trade talks, which took place at the end of last month, a Whitehall source said: "India has said they don't want to speak about trade, they don't want to do trade negotiations because they think it's part of a wider problem of us not taking the attack against the Indian high commission and the wider Sikh separatist movement seriously.

"Indians don't want to talk about trade until they get a very public demonstration of condemnation of Khalistan extremism in the UK. I wouldn't underestimate the strength of feeling on this. They're expecting the government to say something on Sikh extremism before they come back to the table seriously."

The Home Office is planning a crackdown on Sikh extremists and is preparing an announcement in the coming weeks.

It is one of several problems that have slowed talks about a free trade deal with India, seen as one of the biggest goals of post-Brexit trade policy. The talks have also hit a snag over demands for Indians in the UK on worker visas to be exempt from paying national insurance. India has said it is unfair to charge Indians working in the UK temporarily the same rate as British workers when they will not benefit in the form of pensions or healthcare.

However, trade negotiators have stood firm, seeing it as a red line because to give in would encourage other countries to seek similar arrangements, a move that would cost the Treasury at least £500 million a year.

There is a small number of countries that have more limited social security "carve-outs" for their workers, including the US and Japan, but those agreements were signed before 1995.

A third issue that has dented progress is the BBC's documentary about Narendra Modi, which examined tensions between the Indian government and the country's Muslim minority. The Indian government banned the documentary and tax officials raided the BBC's offices in New Delhi and Mumbai after it was broadcast in January.

A fourth problem is comments made by Suella Braverman, the home secretary, who in October expressed concerns about the trade deal because she said it would increase migration to the UK. She cited Home Office statistics that showed Indians represented the largest group of people who overstayed their visas.

A cabinet source said: "Suella has put negotiations back six months. It's been a lot of work to undo the damage."

However, a government source defended her, saying it was "a point of fact" that Indian nationals make up the largest number of visa overstayers in the UK.

"It's the home secretary's job to ensure that visa conditions are compiled with," the source said.

A trade department spokesman said: "Both the UK and India are committed to delivering an ambitious and mutually beneficial free trade agreement and concluded the latest round of trade talks last week. The foreign secretary has condemned the recent acts of violence at the Indian high commission, and we are working with the Metropolitan Police to review security and make changes to ensure the safety of its staff."



Amritpal Singh is calling for a Sikh sovereign state

Birds' flightpath is a natural treasure

The East Atlantic Flyway is on Britain's wishlist of potential Unesco heritage sites, **David Sanderson** writes


ALAMY

Birds flock to the Snettisham RSPB reserve in Norfolk, one of the counties on the route of the East Atlantic Flyway. Iron Age Shetland could also join the Unesco list

Britain is trying to elevate one of the world's most important avian migratory routes and Shetland's Iron Age settlements to the list of the world's most significant cultural and historic sites.

They are among five examples Britain has added to its "tentative list" of places it wishes to be considered as Unesco world heritage sites. The others are York city centre, Birkenhead Park and the Little Cayman marine parks and protected area in the UK overseas territory.

Two other sites — the Flow Country in northern Scotland and the Gracehill Moravian Church settlement in Northern Ireland — are already on the list awaiting approval by the United Nations body.

Britain has 33 world heritage sites, ranging from Stonehenge and the Tower of London in the south to neolithic Orkney and St Kilda in the north.

If York's attempt is successful it would join the Old and New towns of Edinburgh and the city of Bath on the Unesco list.

Britain trails in the global list of world heritage sites, however. Italy has 58, China 56 and Germany 51. France and Spain each have 49.

Lord Parkinson of Whitley Bay, the heritage minister, said the seven nominated sites were "some of the most enchanting heritage sites and breathtaking landscapes in the UK and its overseas territories".

He added: "All the locations being put forward would be worthy recipients of this accolade — and we will give them our full backing so they can benefit from the international recognition it can bring."

The migratory route is known as the East Atlantic Flyway and stretches from Canada and Siberia south through western Europe and west Africa. Huge numbers of birds use it each year. Parts of Yorkshire, Lincolnshire, Norfolk, Sussex, Essex and Kent lie within the Flyway.

Michael Copleston, the director of RSPB England, said the organisation was "absolutely thrilled that the global importance of the English east coast has been recognised".

He added: "The east coast is an essential refuge for over 155 bird species as well as a world-leading example of how we can manage our coastlines in the face of a changing climate, with true value for nature and people."

The Zenith of Iron Age Shetland comprises three sites: the island of Mousa, which contains the oldest still-standing Iron Age round tower in the world; Old Scatness, which has been a settlement for thousands of years; and Jarlshof, which contains remains dating to 2500BC.

Birkenhead Park in Merseyside, which opened in 1847, has also been put on the tentative list. The Department for Culture, Media and Sport said it had been a "pioneering project to bring greenery to urban environments and provided a blueprint for municipal planning that has influenced town and city parks across the world, including New York's Central Park".

David Armstrong, the park's assistant chief executive, said that for several years the goal had been to elevate the park, which is visited by about two million people annually, to Unesco's list.

He said a successful application "would also bolster the wider regeneration of Birkenhead and if ultimately accepted as a world heritage site this flagship park would have its place in history cemented even further, as well adding further to its international recognition".

Keith Aspden, the leader of city of York council, said the council was "thrilled with this acknowledgement of York's world-class heritage and its universal historic and archaeological importance.

"York is an outstanding example of continuous urban development over 2,000 years since its foundation as a Roman legionary fortress with evidence of every succeeding period on its urban development."

He added: "The collection of medieval stained glass in York Minster and the historic parish churches in the city centre is unrivalled. York embraces and values this heritage and will manage it sensitively so that the city continues as a vibrant, innovative, living city."



How countries compare



Italy 58 examples on the list, including historic centre of Siena

China 56, the Great Wall

Germany 51, Speyer Cathedral

France 49, Palace and park of Versailles

Spain 49, Tower of Hercules

India 40, Taj Mahal

Mexico 35, Pre-Hispanic town of Uxmal

UK 33, the Forth Bridge

Russia 30, Lake Baikal

Iran 26, Persepolis

Japan 25, Ogasawara Islands

US 24, Yellowstone national park

Brazil 23, Serra da Capivara national park

Australia 20, Sydney Opera House

Greece 19, Acropolis, Athens

Egypt 7, Memphis and its Necropolis

Dive in! Wild swimming spots to be given regular health checks

Clean it up
WATER CAMPAIGN

Matilda Davies

Four new wild swimming sites will be officially given bathing status from May, benefiting from regular water quality monitoring, Rebecca Pow, the water minister, has announced.

The four sites — a section of the River Deben at Waldringfield in Suffolk, Firestone Bay in Plymouth, and Rutland Water's Sykes Lane bathing beach and Whitwell Creek in Oakham — will be monitored by the Environment Agency. They bring the total number of bathing sites in the UK to 424.

This follows last week's government announcement of a new Plan for Water, which will bring forward £1.6 billion for water companies to upgrade infrastructure between now and 2025 to prevent sewage spills, marking a victory for The Times Clean It Up campaign.

It will also give an additional £34 million to farmers to tackle water pollution and boost food production, and £10 million for farm reservoirs and irrigation.

The campaign is pushing for more rivers and water bodies to reach good ecological status. One of its four manifesto pledges is to secure hundreds of clean bathing sites by the end of the decade.


One of the chosen sites is in Waldringfield, Suffolk

Pow said: "These popular swimming spots will now undergo regular monitoring, starting this May, so bathers have up-to-date information on the quality of the water.

"The regular monitoring also means that action can be taken if minimum standards aren't being met."

The Environment Agency works with local communities, farmers and water companies to assess whether action is needed to cut pollution levels and improve water quality at its designated bathing spots. The number of sites rated with "good" or "excellent" water quality has increased from 76 to 93 per cent since 2010.

Thérèse Coffey, the environment secretary, said: "We've worked hard in recent years to improve the quality of our beautiful rivers, lakes and coastal waters, and our new Plan for Water will help us go further and faster on our targets.

"An incredible 93 per cent of our bathing waters are now considered to be of 'good' or 'excellent' status, and we will continue to push harder through stronger investment and regulation to secure top quality water for everyone."

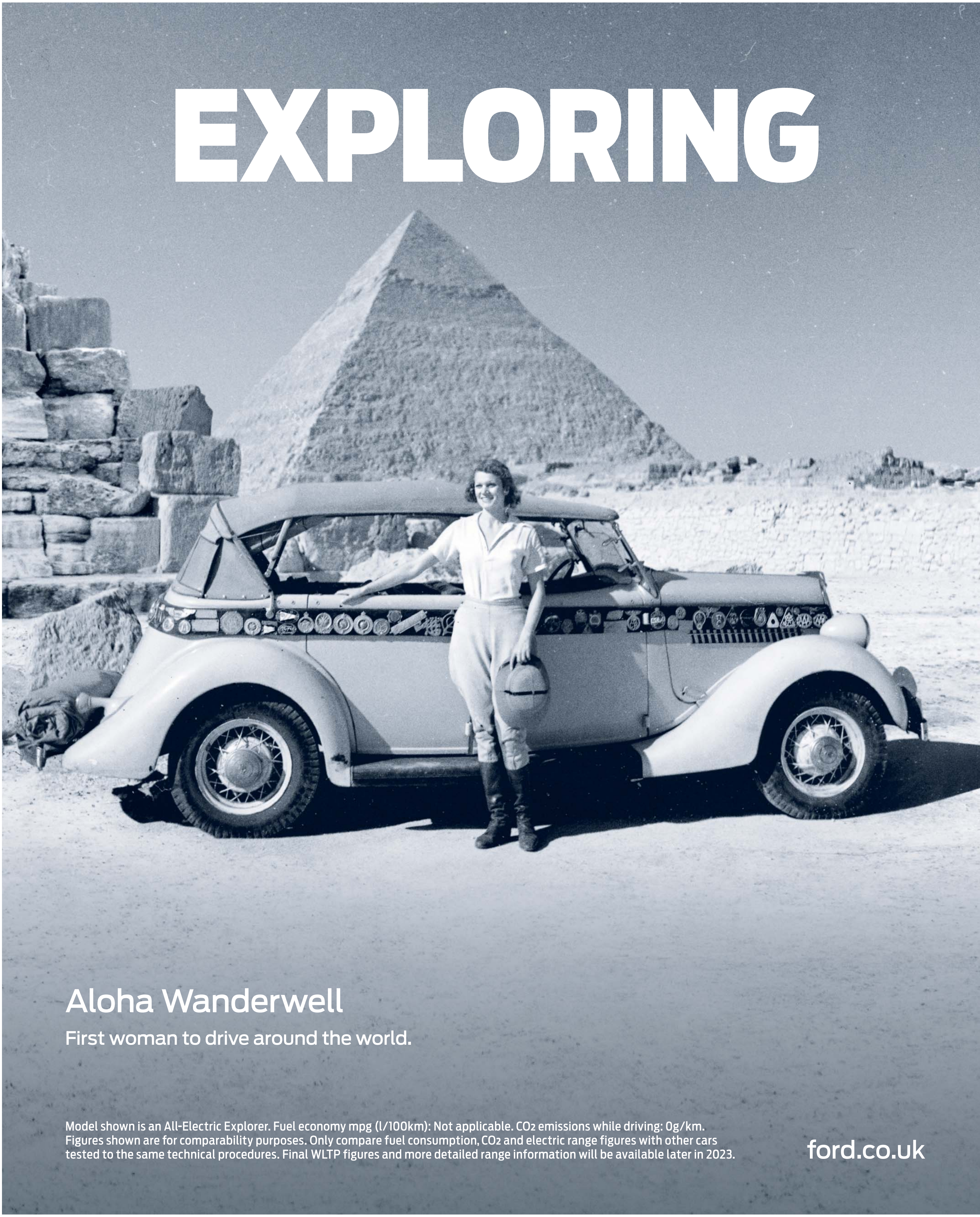
The Department for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs chose the designated sites based on their popularity as wild swimming spots, their infrastructure and facilities, and where water quality regulation would have the largest impact.

Wild swimming has skyrocketed in popularity since the pandemic. Kate Rew, founder of the Outdoor Swimming Society and author of *The Outdoor Swimmers' Handbook*, said access to spaces for wild swimming was vital for people's physical and mental health.

"Swimming is just such a life-giving thing to the people who love it," Rew said.

"It's a very freeing thing to do as well as a free thing to do. It is a really wonderful natural antidote to so much of modern life.

"At a time when we're all so worried about climate change and what we've done to the planet, swimming is a lovely way of bonding with nature again and feeling like you're part of it and it's not all lost."


EXPLORING
Aloha Wanderwell
First woman to drive around the world.
Model shown is an All-Electric Explorer. Fuel economy mpg (l/100km): Not applicable. CO2 emissions while driving: 0g/km.
Figures shown are for comparability purposes. Only compare fuel consumption, CO2 and electric range figures with other cars
tested to the same technical procedures. Final WLTP figures and more detailed range information will be available later in 2023.
ford.co.uk


REINVENTED
III OHA
New All-Electric Ford Explorer
Explore Aloha's Journey, Reinvented.
Ford
BRING ON TOMORROW



NEIL HENDERSON/STORY PICTURE AGENCY

Uphill struggle Competitors do battle with Blue Hills near St Agnes for the finale of the Land's End Trial, which has been a test of automotive endurance each Easter since 1908. The 24-hour event has a variety of routes starting at locations including Exeter and Cirencester

Electric vehicles put heavy burden on older car parks

Matilda Davies

Heavy batteries in electric vehicles could put multistorey car parks at risk of collapse, according to experts.

Chris Whapples, a structural engineer and parking consultant, said that there was "definitely potential" for older car parks "in poor condition to collapse".

Electric vehicle batteries weigh about 500kg, meaning that electric cars tend to weigh significantly more than the equivalent petrol or diesel car.

For example, the electric version of the Peugeot 208 weighs 1,530kg, compared with 1,153kg for the petrol engine version.

The Volkswagen ID.3 weighs an average 1,830kg, compared with the Volkswagen Golf, which weighs 1,388kg.

Whapples told The Daily Telegraph that car park operators might need to limit weight and reassess their infrastructure to account for the increased mass of electric vehicles.

Green NCAP, an organisation that researches car sustainability, found that the average weight of vehicles sold in Europe had increased by 9 per cent, or around 100kg, over the past ten years.

Its research also found that sales of small SUVs (sport utility vehicles) had increased five times in the past decade, making it the most popular new vehicle of last year. Large SUV sales have increased seven times in the same period.

These changes may have also driven the increase in the average kerb weight (the weight of the empty car, with a full fuel tank), as fewer drivers opt for lighter hatchbacks and saloons.

Whapples contributes to the industry textbook *Recommendations for the Inspection, Maintenance and Management of Car Park Structures*, which dictates design requirements for car parks.

The first edition was published in 1976, when the bestselling car was the family saloon Mk 3 Ford Cortina, which weighed about 980kg.

Many multistorey car parks in the UK were built in the 1960s and 1970s — before the first edition's publication.

Today, the best-selling electric family saloon is the Tesla Model 3, which weighs about 1,800kg.

Despite this, the base levels of vertical and horizontal loading intensity — which account for the weight of vehicles when stationary and in motion — had not changed since the textbook's first edition, Whapples wrote in the magazine New Civil Engineer.

In addition, charging points located next to each other in car parks could have a detrimental effect, because they concentrated the heavier cars in one area, he added.

Similar concerns have been aired in the US. Jennifer Homendy, chairwoman of the US government agency the National Transportation Safety Board, raised worries that the greater weight of electric vehicles could be dangerous in car accidents.

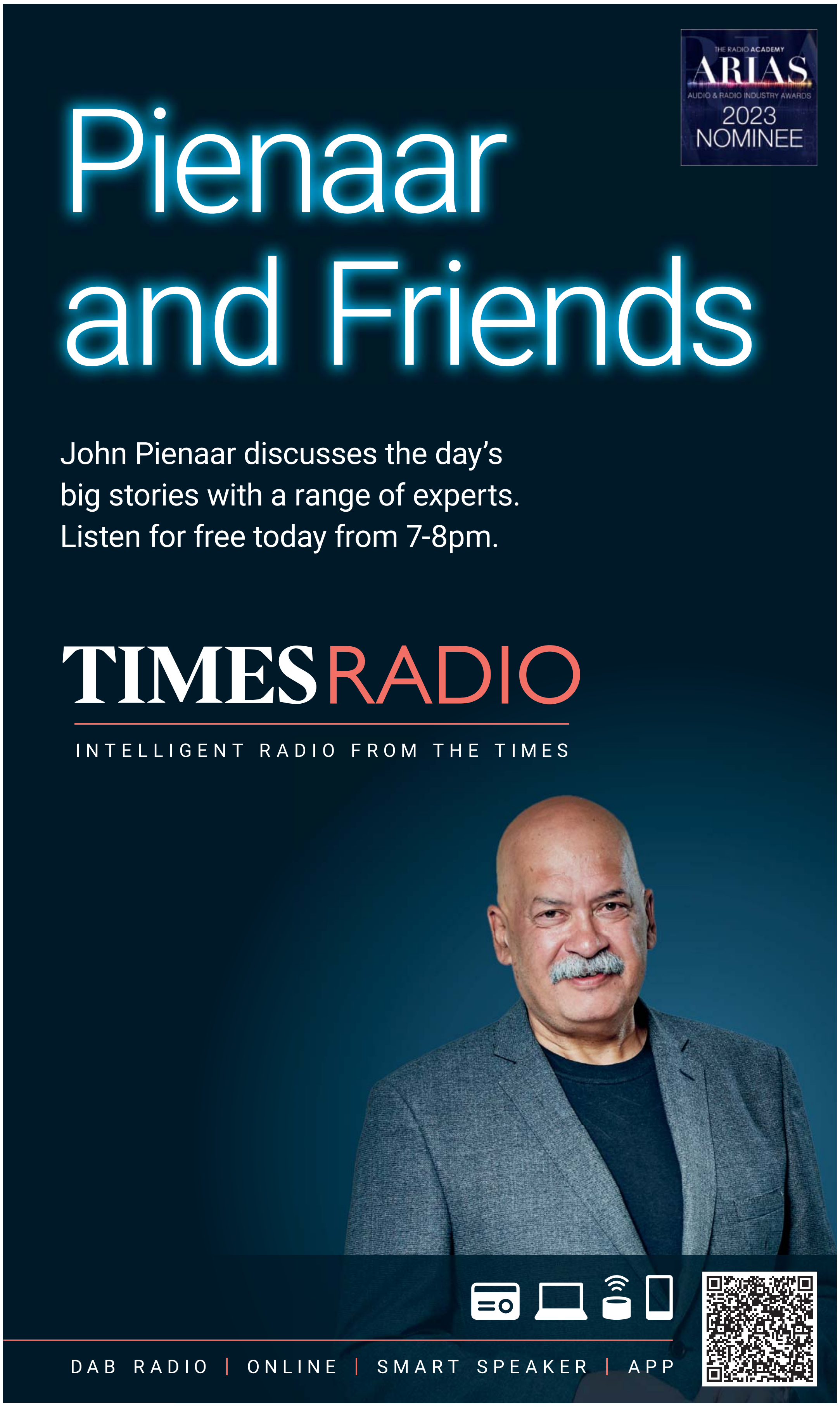
"I'm concerned about the increased risk of severe injury and death for all road users from heavier kerb weights and [the] increasing size, power, and performance of vehicles on our roads, including electric vehicles," Homendy said.

Heavier cars increased the energy imparted during a crash, which could be dangerous for those driving smaller, lighter cars, she said.

Homendy added that the increasing weight of cars and the significant extra weight of electric vehicle batteries could have "a significant impact on safety for all road users".

A study by the American National Bureau of Economic Research found that for every additional 1,000lb (454kg) of vehicle weight, the fatality probability increased by 47 per cent.

Green NCAP's research also found that heavier and larger cars caused more harm to the environment because they consumed more electricity or fuel. So while electric vehicles emitted significantly fewer greenhouse gases, some of those benefits were lost because of their weight.



IN THE TIMES TOMORROW

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PULLOUT

New battle to clear Richard III's villainous name

Jack Blackburn History Correspondent

Was he a child-murdering, ruthless tyrant? Or was he a good king tarnished by a Tudor smear campaign? Defenders of Richard III have long claimed that the last Plantagenet ruler's villainous reputation is undeserved and they are ramping up their efforts to clear his name.

Members of the Richard III Society have secured the republication of a lost 17th century history which casts the king as good and just. It now comes with the approval of the Society of Antiquaries, adding weight to the revisionist case.

"It's a really important text," said Philippa Langley, the historian who spearheaded the successful discovery of Richard III's body a decade ago.

"The Society of Antiquaries guards its reputation fiercely. For them to give it their thumbs up is huge."

The *History of King Richard III* was originally written by Sir George Buck, master of revels for James I. Writing in the early 1600s, he worked hard to find historical sources and his conclusions challenged the orthodox, villainous view of Richard.

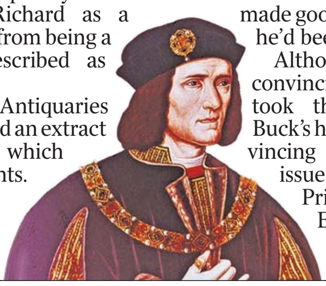
However, Buck did not publish it before his death. Instead, a great-nephew of the same name did so later, editing it heavily and hiding its true contents. The original draft was then damaged in a fire in 1731.

In the latter 20th century, it became the life's work of an academic called Arthur Kincaid to painstakingly piece together the original work from the surviving manuscript and all but seven of its original sources.

Kincaid published a first edition in 1979 but it has long been out of print. However, the discovery of Richard's remains in 2012 provoked the need for a new edition.

Kincaid has not lived to see the new publication but his work has been subjected to the rigours of the Society of Antiquaries' publication committee, meaning that it now carries far more weight. The finished work shows that Buck found contemporary evidence which described Richard as a "good" king and, far from being a tyrant, he was described as "just".

At a Society of Antiquaries seminar, Langley read an extract from Buck's history which illustrated these points.



Richard III's rule was "unfairly tarnished"

"And Richard was accounted a good and faithful man all his life," the reading said. "And was reputed a virtuous prince and wise. And his law and government were of the best and without stain."

Annette Carson, the historian who worked with Kincaid on the new edition, said: "All through the Tudor era people tended to say Richard was an evil man who did evil things, but he made good laws. George Buck said he'd been traduced."

Although the work makes a convincing case that Richard III took the throne legitimately, Buck's history is perhaps less convincing when it addresses the issue of what happened to the Princes in the Tower, King Edward V and his brother Prince Richard of York. "Buck believed that Edward V died as a sickly child, but his reasons for this were a little bit tenuous," Carson said. "As for Richard of York, Buck nailed his colours very firmly to the boy having returned as the pretender to the throne, Perkin Warbeck."

The publication appears to be the first salvo in the latest effort by Ricardians to transform Richard III's reputation. Langley, whose story of discovering Richard III's remains under a Leicester car park was told in the film *The Lost King*, starring Sally Hawkins and Steve Coogan, has been working on a project concerning the fate of the Princes in the Tower which may serve to clear his name of one of history's most mysterious crimes.

The publication of the new edition is also a comfort to Kincaid's widow, Deidre, following his death last July.



BEN EVANS/HUW EVANS AGENCY FOR THE TIMES



Helena Barnard and her husband, Gary, with her kunekune pigs who love going for walkies and are now part of a thriving piggy tourism business

Had a pig of a day? Try a hike with a hog

Mindfulness activities are not usually quite this muddy, or accompanied by a soundtrack of grunts and oinks (Kat Lay writes).

"Piggy walks" in Wales are proving popular with stressed-out tourists seeking solace in nature by walking, playing and paddling with a species of small, hairy pigs.

"People feel they can express themselves a bit," says Julia Blazer, whose company arranges the activity. "Pigs, obviously, are very similar to humans. A lot of people relate to them."

Blazer, 55, left London with her husband almost 19 years ago for rural life in Brecon.

After her high-end design business failed during the last recession, she started Good Day Out, offering experiences with animals in the local area, with a proportion of fees going to charity.

The idea for the walks came about after she noticed a group of small kunekune pigs, a New Zealand breed — living in the field nearby. "They used to jump over their little electric fence and go walking," she says. It transpired that the pigs' owner, Helena Barnard, and her husband used to visit a relative who lived a quarter of a mile away and the animals were in the habit of joining them. "One day she said to me, 'Will people pay to walk the pigs?' Her husband said, 'If they do, I will eat my hat'."

He was wrong. The first group of pigs are long gone but the "middle-aged girls" Babz, six, and Holly, Hazel and Willow, all five, now entertain tourists between April and October. As well as walks, there are more sedate "piggy spa days", when visitors can get muddy with the animals and brush them.

Blazer had not envisioned the pig trails, which cost from £35 for two hours, as a mental health therapy "but people just turn up [and] you can see it helping them". She added: "We have a fair amount of people with PTSD, or who have autism. You can see people really relaxing and being comfortable." She said that most visitors reported "being incredibly happy" after spending time with the pigs.

West Country police use drones to pick out dangerous drivers

Jonathan Ames Legal Editor

Police in the West Country have begun to use drones in an effort to monitor moving vehicles and clamp down on poor driving.

Trouble spots on the roads of Devon and Cornwall are being scanned this Easter holiday by the devices under the control of a specialist unit, in what is thought to be the first initiative of its kind. Senior officers at Devon and Cornwall Police said that devices could monitor vehicles from 3.7 miles. The technology was being focused on motorcyclists over the bank holiday weekend as there was a history of dangerous driving at this time of year.

Chief Inspector Ben Asprey, head of roads policing at Devon and Cornwall Police, said motorcycle riders were being targeted after 16 died on the counties' roads last year — the highest figure for five years. Another 187 motorcyclists were seriously injured.

"Despite motorcyclists making up less than 1 per cent of overall traffic, they account for roughly a third of all serious and fatal collisions in our area," said Asprey. The force was "determined to drive those numbers down".

The operation was launched last week and uses drones to calculate vehicle speed through fixed points on various roads. The drones take video recordings to gather evidence of dangerous or inappropriate driving.

According to senior officers, when drones detect vehicles potentially breaking the law, details are relayed to police, who check MOT, tax and insurance details and whether it has been reported stolen. Speed-detection officers use calibrated laser cameras to record the speed of the vehicle.

Officials said that depending on the potential offence, motorcyclists would be given words of advice, referred on to a training course or issued with a fine and penalty points.

In more serious cases, riders would be reported to court for prosecution or arrested on the spot.

Inspector Colin Harper of the force's drone team said that the drones "will give us early warning of any offences and allow us to be far more targeted in our approach on the ground".

Harper said the force would deploy the drones on roads where there was a history of motorbikes speeding and on dates when specialist events were scheduled. "Our focus is on motorcyclists who are at highest risk according to our data, particularly at this time of year when more riders will be venturing out again after the winter," he said.

Vision Zero South West, a road safety group, said it was planning a campaign "to change behaviour among riders".

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It is time to get real about the Russian threat
Edward Lucas
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Comment

Loudmouth minorities are ruling the roost

The capture of the SNP by a small group of fanatics is only the latest example of a phenomenon long known in history



@TREVORPTWEETS

'Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord." Kate Forbes, the former finance minister of Scotland, may be reflecting this Easter that the Almighty can be gratifyingly swift in settling debts.

Forbes was narrowly defeated by a rival who attacked her profession of the Christian faith, while weaselling out of declaring his own religious commitments. Yet within days of his election, there were police with shovels in Nicola Sturgeon's garden and the SNP's auditors had made their excuses and left. For Humza Yousaf, who presented himself as the continuity candidate, there can be no handwashing of the catastrophe, no Pontius Pilate option available.

Not even the sternest elders would censure Forbes for muttering "God is good" under her breath. There's a good chance that soon, the shrinking membership will grasp that it elected the wrong leader, and roll away the stone that entombed her political career. She could usefully spend the time before resurrection considering how the SNP collapse was triggered in part by a tiny band of fanatics committed to the outlandish belief that anyone can decide that they are a woman just because they feel like it.

The SNP is well placed to understand how a tail with a minority obsession can end up wagging the dog, since that is the story of its own ascent. The party failed to win more than a single parliamentary seat in the first 40 years of its existence. It almost extinguished itself by Pythonesque internecine warfare ("We're the Judean People's Front, not the People's Front of Judea! Splitters!") and was treated as a joke by Scotland's political establishment. Yet it now dominates Holyrood and Labour's hopes of victory at the next general election rest on its demise.

But the SNP is not alone in confronting the threat of an extremist tail wagging the mainstream dog. In the jargon, it is called institutional capture: the takeover of large groups of people by small teams of determined, single-minded individuals imbued with the sincere belief that they are called to save humanity in spite of itself.

This is not a left-right problem, though progressive overreach is more common. The Tory brand was comprehensively wrecked by the manoeuvrings of fringe groupings for whom no version of Brexit could ever be pure enough. Sir Keir Starmer still finds it impossible to adopt the language of the majority of his own voters for fear of offending his younger supporters.

> Non-partisan groups with good causes can be undermined as well

Even non-partisan movements with good causes to fight are undermined by the tail-waggers. Just Stop Oil and Extinction Rebellion have forced mainstream politicians to adopt unpopular low-traffic neighbourhoods in London. The police find themselves co-operating with Islamist sects on the grounds that not to do so might see them branded as Islamophobic. The bright promise of the Black Lives Matter movement evaporated the day that its leaders adopted the slogan "defund the police" and swerved into an ideological digression about reparations for slavery.

The sway of extremists in moderate movements is not new. It is now almost exactly a century since the most effective tail-wagger of modern times, Vladimir Lenin, was muted by a stroke. But in the chaos of revolutionary Russia he had already set a template for the triumph of the few over the many. The Bolsheviks worked harder than anyone else; they weren't the first to insist that their disciples had to give up everything and be professional revolutionaries: as someone once said, "Follow me and I will make you fishers of men". Lenin wore his enemies down, arguing through the night. His refusal to compromise intimidated lesser spirits.

Second, the tail-waggers claim to speak for entire groups or classes of people, usually without much justification. In 1917, the Bolsheviks said they were the voice of the entire proletariat, much as Robespierre had spoken for the sans-culottes. Today, Stonewall claims to have the entire LGBT community in its ranks, the various BLM groups say they speak for all black folk. They get away with it because the authorities, un-diverse themselves, simply lack the confidence to challenge the extremists.

Third, they have no qualms about ruthlessly exploiting any traces of personal guilt. An elite class that is largely white and male rightly worries about its own culpability in injustice. Reports of sexual harassment by other business leaders will leave many wondering if they too have ever stepped over the line; "white privilege" touches the tender parts of the conscience. Liberal guilt is fair game in any circumstance. But it leads to weak leadership, frightened of its own shadow.



The call to defund police dissolved the bright promise of Black Lives Matter

Finally, they deploy the half-truth without hesitation. We learnt last week that the brass manillas from which the Benin "bronzes" were sculpted probably came from Europe. Twenty years ago I discovered that Bristol was at one point the largest manufacturer of such objects. There is very little said about what the Nigerians gave the Europeans in return for the metal, which was the common currency in Africa.

I approve of our own King's support for research into the royal family's past dealings in the slave trade; but perhaps someone might also ask the oil-rich state how much it plans to offer the descendants of slaves sold into what Bob Marley called "the bottomless pit" of the Atlantic slave ships. I'd love to know what value they put on my family.

There are signs that the moderate voices in our institutions are recovering their confidence. Baroness Falkner of Margravine, who chairs the Equality and Human Rights Commission, is bravely resolving the lack of clarity in our equality law in spite of opposition. One or two media outlets have told their staff that if they want to be advocates rather than journalists they should find somewhere else to work. The History Matters project at the Policy Exchange think tank has shown that almost every time the public is asked about changing a street name, or pulling down a statue, they respond that the authorities really should have better things to do.

> There are signs that moderate groups are recovering confidence

Yet week by week, loud and unrepresentative groups still get their way, cornering the grown-ups into agreeing to things they know to be wrong. The traditional moderating influences such as trade unions and churches are in decline; and what little is left of their power has itself been captured. And the cleverest part of the extremist surge has been to trick the political and media elite into convincing itself that this "culture war stuff" is all just made up by the right to prevent progress. It took 70 years to unwind the capture of the Russian state by a tiny band of Bolsheviks. The whole world is still paying the price in blood and treasure.

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TIMES Luxury

It is time to get real about the Russian threat

Eastern Europeans know that unless Ukraine claims victory the Kremlin will be back for more

Edward Lucas

@EDWARDLUCAS



Will Britain stand with the jumpy easterners or the sleepy westerners? That is the dilemma posed by our allies' emerging division over the war in Ukraine. For most west Europeans the chief priority is to contain and manage the conflict. For those neighbouring Russia it is an existential struggle that must be won decisively. It can't be both.

If Ukraine's looming offensive fails, stalls or brings only modest gains, countries like France, Germany, Italy and Spain will flinch at the prospect of another year of fighting, with the cost and risk it entails. They, along with many in the United States administration, will see the time ripening for some kind of land-for-peace deal, perhaps brokered by China.

Conversely, if the big counter-attack succeeds significantly, many westerners will get cold feet for different reasons. It is right to try to push Vladimir Putin's forces out of some or most of the territory they have occupied, they reckon, to set the scene for negotiations. But the Russian leader should not be cornered or humiliated to the point that he might consider using nuclear weapons.

This limit could be reached quite quickly: Ukraine does not need to reconquer Crimea, for example. It just needs to use artillery or missiles to cripple Russia's ability to supply the peninsula by rail or road. The prized Russian trophy will then become, in effect, a Ukrainian hostage. Putin would then threaten escalation in the hope of shredding western nerves.

Any sign of political change in Russia will intensify this pressure. Western countries will worry that Putin's successor might be worse: an outright fascist or a maniac. They would dislike disorder in Russia too, with regime cronies squabbling over the succession. They mind even more about the (unlikelier) prospect of Russia's disintegration, with warlords vying for control of the country's colossal nuclear arsenal. To forestall any of these outcomes, panicky allies would tell the Ukrainians to cash in their chips quickly.

> Western countries fear Putin's successor will be fascist or a maniac

Countries closer to Russia, such as Finland, Estonia, Latvia, Lithuania and Poland, see the war quite differently. Their flinty perception is based not just on their 30 years of warnings, unheeded in western Europe, about Russia's trajectory to repression at home and aggression abroad. It also draws on deep historical traumas. Last month, for example, the Baltic states marked the anniversary of the Soviet deportations of 1949. The 90,000 people exiled to remote provinces included a six-month-old baby called Kristi, who survived the three-week journey only thanks to the kindness of strangers in the same cattle wagon. Her daughter, Kaja Kallas, is Estonia's prime minister.

The atrocities Russia inflicts now on Ukraine echo these experiences and awaken new fears. The east Europeans' intense support for the Ukrainian cause rests not on the desire to back a winner but on the understanding that if Russian imperialism is not defeated now, the Kremlin will be back for more later.

From this point of view, the risk of escalation if setbacks mount for Putin is less than the danger posed by a postwar Russia still gripped by messianic militarism. The easterners are also more sanguine about political upheavals in Moscow. Russia's periodic bouts of disorder are usually good news for its neighbours. The chaos that followed the Bolshevik Revolution and Russia's defeat in 1917 allowed Poland, the Baltic states and Finland to regain their statehood. The collapse of the Soviet Union freed its captive nations and removed the Kremlin's grip on Finland's throat. The biggest worry for these countries is of western leaders trading the easterners' security for the phoney prospect of stability in Russia, a frequent temptation in the 1990s.

Many outside the region find all this hard to grasp. Putin's war has already been a disaster. A repeat performance would be insane. Russia's armed forces have performed poorly in Ukraine and suffered enormous damage. How could they possibly pose a threat to a Nato country?

This complacent analysis ignores the resilience of Russia's war economy and the formidable hold the Kremlin's anti-westernism now has on public opinion there. Well-informed estimates of the time it could take Russia to reload once the fighting in Ukraine pauses vary from eight years to (alarmingly) just three. It is worth noting that only Russia's army has taken a pounding in the past 14 months: the navy, air force and other elements of Putin's arsenal are almost untouched.

Meanwhile, dithering, division and grandstanding in western countries have squandered the time that Ukraine has bought us. A sharp recent example of this is President Macron's comically vainglorious trip to China, which undermined the European Union's nascent attempts to reduce its economic dependence on the party-state in Beijing and harmed in American eyes all Europeans' reputation for reliability and effectiveness.

Even assuming (heroically) the sudden arrival of money and political will, Europeans will need a decade to get their armed forces back into shape. Meanwhile, the United States — the guarantor of our security — is increasingly distracted by the threat from China. A return of Trump, or a Trumpian Republican, to the White House, would compound this, leaving the feckless European allies even more dangerously exposed.

This problem cannot be wished away. Whether we like it or not, we and our European neighbours will face an aggressive, dangerous Russia for a decade or more, and we are ill placed to handle it on our own. Dumping our delusions would be a good start.

Juliet Samuel Notebook

Name game: now you Xi him, now you don't

However bad a time you had before Easter, be grateful you weren't editor of China's People's Daily. The official newspaper of the Chinese Communist Party had to issue an urgent recall for millions of copies after a stirring editorial on how "unity and struggle are the only way for the Chinese people to forge a historical undertaking" accidentally omitted President Xi's name from a sentence. The offending phrase ought to have said: "The central government with comrade Xi Jinping at the core assesses the situation." But the name didn't appear.

Admittedly, it must be hard for the censors to keep up. Online, during important political periods, Xi's name is often banned altogether from social media platforms, along with any image of or reference to Winnie the Pooh, who is his satirically assigned alter ego. Naturally, keyboard warriors are very creative when faced with such a challenge, initiating a game of cat and mouse that is highly resource-intensive for Chinese internet companies.

Another alias for Xi is "200 pounds", or some variation, after a famous propaganda story in which he claimed he used to carry 200 pounds of wheat across the mountains on one shoulder while living with peasants during the Cultural Revolution. When all else fails, however, users simply use the Voldemort-like "he" and "him". As a result, on politically significant days, the use of male pronouns on the Chinese internet is censored.

All of this might seem a little petty, but according to Foreign Policy's China watcher James Palmer, small changes in written Chinese can introduce huge opportunities for innuendo or insult. The language, in other words, is built for satire. What a shame its political system is built for humourless, paranoid tyrants.



Basic error

On another note, Emmanuel Macron no doubt enjoyed the hero's welcome he received upon landing in Beijing last week, when he emerged from his plane to a generous red carpet lined with ranks of pouting soldiers in gold belts and a greeting by the Chinese foreign minister. Perhaps it even made up for the predictable failure of his diplomatic mission to get Xi to rein in Russia (not in China's interests and never going to happen).

But Monsieur Europe might have shown a little more solidarité if, having invited Ursula von der Leyen on the trip in a show of unity, he had at least let her hitch a ride. Instead, the EU president arrived a few days later to be greeted by Beijing's minister of ecology at the regular arrivals terminal. She was not invited to a state banquet; Macron was. He was flattered by state media; she was lambasted. He was greeted in Tiananmen Square by the great dictator himself; she arrived alone. This is basic stuff and it makes fools of us all.

Silly question

Occasionally I get emails advertising talks put on at my alma mater. A recent one, by an academic called Dr Thekla Morgenroth, was entitled: "Why do people defend the gender binary?" The blurb advertised that Morgenroth would put forward a novel theory about why people are so irrationally attached to the idea that the human species is divisible into two sexes. Apparently, this notion "fulfils a range of psychological needs" and involves mysterious "underlying psychological mechanisms".

A news item I read shortly afterwards detailed how Swim England, the sport's official body, had determined that trans people would not be allowed to compete in the category for women at the highest levels — because it makes it impossible for real women to win.

History lesson

During the service for Passover, which was last week, we recall how the Hebrew slaves were finally let go from Egypt after the tenth plague: "When the cup of suffering had run over, Egypt's grip was loosened." But: "Pharaoh's heart changed yet again — for the oppressors' fury grows as their grip begins to weaken, and in their rage they pursue their victims even to their own destruction." It was not Xi, but Putin who came to mind. Oppressors change; human nature is eternal.

THUNDERER

Church needs to fund more vicars to reverse decline

Emma Thompson

Last week a Church of England report confirmed what village communities already know: cutting parish vicars and service provision reduces church attendance ("More than a quarter of churches hold no weekly Sunday service", April 4). Yet it is astonishing how bishops and diocesan bureaucrats continue to impose clergy cuts as a "strategy".

They claim there is no alternative, for financial reasons. However, the adage that "the Church is rich" holds true. About 70 per cent of its annual income comes from the parishes, and 30 per cent from an investment portfolio worth billions. Financial volunteers from the network Save the Parish have proved from published accounts that clergy-cutting is not financially necessary but a political choice.

Church leaders' spending priorities — bureaucracy and "projects" — are skewing resources away from small and rural parishes, although rural parishes donate nearly half the total raised by parish congregations. More managers are being hired. There are 950 clergy in office jobs rather than parishes.

Covid apparently provided an opportunity to "reimagine ministry". With what evidence, justification or policy discussion? Meanwhile, many parish churches are being deliberately left vicarless ("in vacancy") for long periods. The report shows that this shrinks congregations; and that merging parishes, spreading clergy thinly, means fewer services.

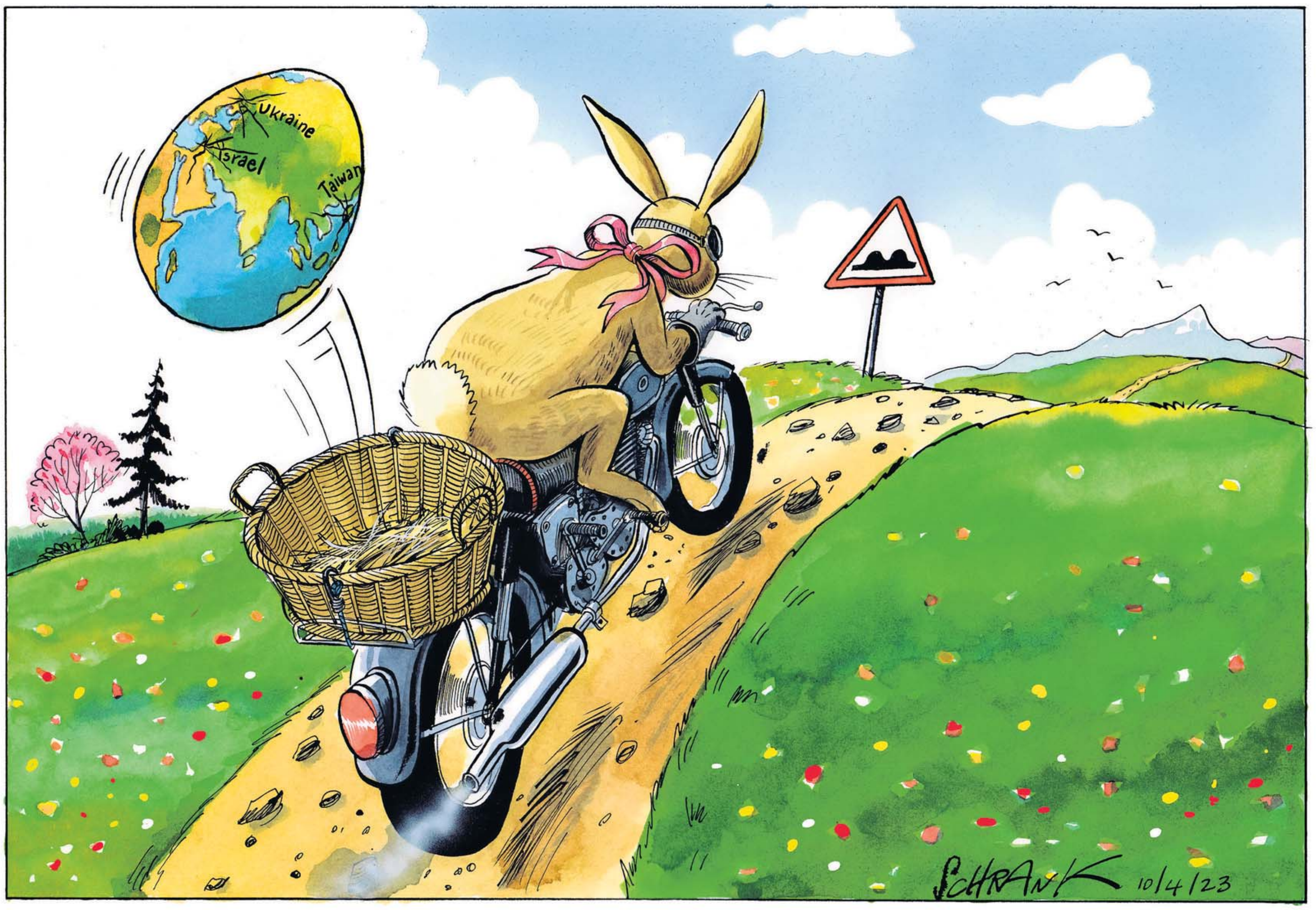
Studies show that fewer paid priests means lower attendance and giving. Yet congregations appear to be blamed for the fall in churchgoing. Volunteers seem expected to take services instead.

My local church — which provides lunches for the elderly, litter-picks, food bank collections, and support to the lonely and isolated — remains at the village community's heart. The rector, living among us, is regularly called out in crises. Local churches provide the equivalent of £55 billion per annum of social care, according to the National Churches Trust. In the C of E, it is local parish clergy who foster love, co-operation and trust.

The Archbishop of York has said: "We want the Church of England to grow, and even if it doesn't, then let our death be a grand operatic death." But you can't stage an opera if you start by firing the singers. You can't expect untrained audience members to do the singing, keep paying for tickets and bring in new supporters.

Why is the Church of England flying in the face of evidence which clearly demonstrates that cutting clergy and merging parishes is the wrong response to decline? It is accelerating its own decline.

Emma Thompson is a journalist and supporter of savetheparish.com



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Nike is putting women last and money first

Creepy Dylan Mulvaney advert perpetuates ancient male fears of true female physicality and endangers young girls

Libby Purves



@LIB_THINKS

Nobody needs to buy Nike or heed its advertising. Nor do I grudge a gig to Dylan Mulvaney, a male-born TikToker identifying as a girl after "facial feminisation surgery". Let's not condemn a struggling young worker just for being filmed prancing around bare-tummied in leggings and a woman's sports bra, delivering flirty moues to the camera. It's a job. Good luck, Dylan: be who you want.

I do very much blame Nike though, shudder at the advertisement and spit on the company's hypocritical claim that it will "authentically connect with audiences across various demographics".

Translation: make gender-theorists happy and sell to a generation that rejects what it believes to be the social fascism of their elders (hang on, that'll be the same elders who battled for gay marriage and supported the rights of women like Jan Morris and April Ashley, but are now damned for saying biology is real and women sometimes need privacy).

Nike is earning boycotts over this silly ad, where a still-male torso gambols not very athletically in a sports bra. It is disastrously timed just as World Athletics finally protects women's sport against competitors strengthened by male puberty.

The Olympic silver medallist Sharron Davies calls it a kick in the teeth, says it ignores female reality and is "a parody of what women are". The trans Caitlyn Jenner (once a male Olympian) pleads: "We can be inclusive, but not at the expense of the mass majority of people, and have some decency while being inclusive. This is an outrage."

Why does this stuff matter? Because its aspirational androgyny reinforces something older than trans-wars: above our prissy disputatious swamp rises an ancient crocodile-head of fear and disgust at ripe female physicality. It lives in ancient obscene idols, in some religions harping on the Virgin Mary's spotlessness and others demanding hair be hidden. It's in the Freudian myth of the hostile "*vagina dentata*" threatening to devour the male, and in centuries of women's bodies veiled, distorted and rearranged with whalebone to be less troublesome.

You can find it in the way insults veer from simple criticism of behaviour to physical horror, in the Book of Leviticus condemning our monthly "uncleanness" and the medieval fascination with witches' breasts. You hear it in King Lear's dementia: "But to the girdle do the gods inherit — beneath is all the fiend's; there's hell, there's darkness, there's the sulphurous pit, burning, scalding, stench, consumption! Fie, fie, fie! Pah, pah!"

Roll the years on and you find that dread lurking genteelly in Edwardiana like John Buchan where

> Some will see the flat torso and hate their less tameable bodies

the ideal woman is always "slim as a boy", or the conflicted-libertine oddity of Graham Greene, as Pinkie shrinks from Rose and the gay predators; in his *May We Borrow Your Husband?*, shudder to think of a handsome passing honeymooner condemned to his bride's yucky softness. I even encountered it once in a tipsy bishop affirming that women priests were impossible, because it would be "unspeakably sacrilegious" for one to say Mass while pregnant or on a period. Ugh, women! Mischievously, Fay Weldon got revenge by ramping it up in her witchy rural Mab who hid "murk and mystery" below her thick skirt.

The weird immature revulsion, the curse of Eve supercharged by adolescent Oedipalism, still hangs about. It sends an echo to girls themselves in normal puberty. One day you're a straight-up-and-down child like your brother — maybe even taller — then gradually you change. Nature ensures that even slim women carry a greater proportion of fat: 18 to 20 per cent as against 10 to 15 per cent in men. Not just breasts, but a softened outline over muscles, newly rounded surfaces and folds young men don't have. It's alluring in healthy sexual attraction, and physiologically useful to secrete hormones and build reserves for childbearing. But when the fashion is for hard boyish slenderness, even normal development can be perceived as shameful fat: sweaty and unclean, repellent even in normal healthy shapes.

Most young women get over it and rejoice in their grown-up lusciousness. A few girls dive defensively into aggressive "body positivity", even when it really does become dangerous obesity. But some internalise the ancient revulsion and try to duck out: an acknowledged trigger for anorexia is escape from the burden of womanhood. Shrink that unwanted flesh, stop that monthly bleeding. When you add socially idealised images in which a young woman is either top-heavily buxom like Jessica Rabbit or unnaturally skinny, confusion grows.

Some will see young Dylan's flat torso beneath its unnecessary bra and hate their own less tameable bodies. Others, enjoying pretty androgyny (another ancient fascination), will join the many schoolgirls who now declare themselves to be boys, thus spared the problem of messy womanhood.

They will be met with flailing, kindly willingness by teachers and parents, and some will be channelled towards irreversible medical intervention. Yet, given time and confidence and new horizons, all but a tiny minority could decide not to bother but just get on with being a female human — gay or straight — with a life to build.

I hope most will just shrug at the ad: girls are not fools. But shame on Nike if even a few, appalled by their body's unnerving new need for a real bra, get conned into starving self-hatred by Mulvaney's Tinkerbell faux-girlishness. Shame on this tittering commercial contribution to a dangerous old misogyny: that the male body is not only stronger but the aspirational norm, cleaner and sharper and holier. Even looking cooler in a sports bra than any real girl. Creepy.

Letters to the Editor

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letters@thetimes.co.uk or by post to
1 London Bridge Street, London SE1 9GF

Striking doctors

Sir, I believe that my former medical school dean Gareth Williams is wrong to assert that undertaking industrial action to reverse a 15-year decline in real-terms pay is inconsistent with a professional and ethical code (letter, Apr 8). When I left Bristol University I had about £45,000 of student debt. This year's graduates can expect to owe twice as much and will accrue interest faster than they can repay the loan from their salaries, which are worth almost a quarter less than mine was at the time.

I am grateful to my junior doctor colleagues for recognising the greater risk to the future of the NHS posed by mass migration of our medical workforce to countries that recognise the value of their professionalism, training and skills. In the words of my graduation oath, I, and other senior doctors, will be filling shifts to "work for the good of all persons whose health may be placed in [our] care" next week, so our junior doctor colleagues can set about securing the "public wellbeing" for the next decade.
Edward Miles
Consultant anaesthetist, Bristol

Sir, Should I need medical care I do not want to be treated by a doctor who has been on strike. If that doctor can forsake an oath to provide patient care, they are not fit to treat me, and I wish to "go on strike" and refuse to be treated by him or her.
Robin Hay
Newmarket, Suffolk

Showing bottle

Sir, I cannot match the elevated milieu of Sir Brian Unwin's delightful reminiscence about Nigel Lawson (letter, Apr 7), but as a fairly junior Bank of England official I attended a meeting with Lawson. As it dragged on into the evening, the chancellor generously called for drinks. My Treasury counterpart was dispatched to hunt for a bottle and reappeared with a distinctly economical bottle of sauvignon blanc, but no bottle opener. Fortunately, I carry a Swiss army penknife and was able to open the bottle — at which Lawson exclaimed: "You can always rely on the Bank of England in an emergency."

I'm not sure whether my contribution helped the meeting to the right conclusion, but it surely helped the Bank's standing in the eyes of the Treasury and, I hope, Nigel Lawson.
Ian Plenderleith
Executive director, Bank of England, 1994-2002

Corrections and clarifications

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Government plans to scrap housing targets

Sir, My authority spends thousands of officer and councillor hours per year trying to ensure that planning permission is granted to quality schemes ("Housing targets scrapped", Apr 8). Yet the arbitrary housing need number — about 900 homes a year in east Devon — makes this impossible to achieve. Our real problems are not nimbyesque. They concern unfit-for-purpose sewage and drainage infrastructure, the lack of GPs, places in education, transport and local jobs.

When major schemes are approved, experience has shown many to be poorly built, with gardens, at best, the size of a cricket wicket. Meanwhile, any landowner able to ensure their grassy patch is designated as developable will make millions for nothing more than assigning rights.

If councils try to build social homes, there is no effective way to protect from the right to buy, and affordable homes, at, say, 80 per cent of local market rent, are anything but. The country needs an urgent, cross-party commission on homes, with no powers off the table. And please shelve the term "nimby"; it is about as helpful as the term "Remoaner".
Paul Arnott
Leader, East Devon district council

Sir, The assertion that nimbys are only interested in preserving the value of their houses is wide of the mark. I have long been engaged in community reaction to development proposals in London. Rarely do I experience outright opposition to development and that usually revolves around the loss of green space. The majority of large schemes are for tall, dense, poorly designed blocks of tiny flats, many of which will be occupied by footloose buy-to-let tenants. So it should be no surprise that residents in settled suburban communities of low-rise family houses are roused to fury. Proposals for, say, streets of small terraced houses would rarely experience opposition.
Gordon Massey
Chairman, Federation of Residents' Associations in Barnet

Sir, In my 16 years as a county councillor and 21 as a district councillor the vast majority of people did not object to new housing. They did object to longer traffic jams, longer GP waiting times, children being bussed to schools miles away from their homes, more flooding and sewage in local rivers — in other words to a lack of infrastructure. Developers promise all sorts of infrastructure improvements to get planning approval then do all they can to renege on those promises. It would be better to build the infrastructure first with government-backed loans. Then, as each house is built, a percentage of the sale price pays back the loan. All the time infrastructure is meant to follow the houses there will be objections. Not because of nimbys but because no one believes — and experience shows they're right — that adequate infrastructure will ever be built.
David Simpson
Darby Green, Hants

Sir, There is a subtle but important difference between housing "need" and housing "demand". The analysis with your article highlights one of the main needs: affordable options for young adults. Here in Horsham there are thousands of houses in new estates imposed across the green belt, which are patently not what those locally in need can afford. Our local political parties should ensure that any new builds are focused solely on what is needed for the local population, not merely fuelling a market "demand".
Bernice Baker
Horsham, West Sussex

Private school tax

Sir, One point that your otherwise comprehensive report "Does Labour's tax on private schools add up?" (Apr 8) omits to mention is that, by pricing all but the extremely wealthy out of the market, a Labour government would merely exacerbate what it claims to be resisting. Assuming that, in a free and international market, private schools both maintain their excellence in academic, sport and extracurricular activities and continue to exist, they will simply become more elitist, attracting only the very wealthiest through their doors. Surely this rather defeats the object.
James Stevenson
Salisbury

Museums rethink

Sir, As a regular museum/art gallery visitor, I agree with the criticisms levelled at British institutions (Richard Morrison, Apr 7; letter, Apr 8): pushing people to book in advance; one-way systems no longer necessary; and sometimes allowing too many people in at once, which makes an exhibition unbearably crowded.

But there are two other issues: the cost of cloakrooms and the cost and quality of food at museum cafés. I was lucky enough to go to Amsterdam recently, where I visited the Vermeer exhibition at the Rijksmuseum and a number of other museums and galleries. There were free lockers and cloakrooms at all of them and the food in the two cafés I ate at was really good and at very fair prices. I do not find that British gallery cafés are worth going to because of the cost and quality.

Dutch museums charge an entry fee. Perhaps it is time to rethink free entry in Britain to provide the funding to improve the facilities that help make a museum visit enjoyable.
Marcia MacLeod
London NW6

Jesus wasn't victim

Sir, Matthew Parris (comment, Apr 8) is right to "deeply distrust humanity's itch to elevate victimhood". Claiming victimhood as the core of one's identity is, as he writes, self-demeaning. Alas Christians have sometimes cultivated a morbid delight in suffering, as it were good in itself. There are victims to whom the Church should reach out, but no one should ever be defined by this status. The Resurrection is the triumph over all such oppression. Obsession with victimhood is an implicit rejection of Christianity's central doctrine. Happy Easter.
Father Timothy Radcliffe, OP
Oxford

Bard's Oxford links

Sir, Your news story and leading article (Apr 8) noted there are many connections to Oxford University in Shakespeare's First Folio. There is another Oxford connection which was not mentioned by your experts. The patrons of the First Folio were the two Pembroke brothers, one of whom was married to Susan de Vere, the daughter of Edward de Vere, the Earl of Oxford and possible author of the plays in the Folio. She was an acknowledged poet in her own right and was almost certainly the source of the manuscripts on which the publication was based.
Dr Alan Cohen
Northwood, Middx

THE 30-HP DAIMLER. A NEW 7-SEATER

FROM THE TIMES APRIL 10, 1923

Cars which will hold and carry seven persons comfortably and are not luxuriously expensive to buy and run are few and far between. Many models are called five or seven seaters, but in reality are only suitable for four or six, while the occasional seats usually offer small comfort on a long journey.

The 30hp standard Daimler landaulette is free from criticism in this respect. The complete car costs £1,625, and will hold seven grown persons with ease. The rear seat will take three, without one having to sit askew, and the occasional seats are of a good pattern, with backs which afford proper support. The complete chairs are removable, and will swivel, while the seats are made to tip up. There are six large windows to the interior, besides the small one in the back. All these are of the frameless pattern, which permits the most view, and lower well down into the recesses. The body was commendably free from draughts and rattles, and both driver's and passenger's seats in front are comfortable.

The car sent to me for trial was fitted with a wireless installation for listening-in, though this is not, of course, part of the standard equipment. The windows are easily operated and the doors to the interior are provided with locks. It would be an advantage were a pair of well-fitting drop curtains arranged for protecting the driver and front passenger, and there is room for improvement in the provision of lockers, pockets, and shelves inside, as well as in front. With the running of the car I have little fault to find. The springing, however, would stand improvement. It is true that one is comfortable at all times, but with only a light load of two persons and on a corrugated road this is due more to the excellence of the seating than to the chassis springs. The steering is delightfully light, and with the wide lock enables the landaulette to be handled like a small car. The engine is smooth, imparts a goodly feeling of reserve power, and pulls with quiet strength. Fifty miles an hour on an adverse gradient was touched. Customers are offered the choice of a complete range of special cloths for the interior, and thus are able to give an individual character to their car.

As passenger and driver I found the landaulette comfortable, and a distinct pleasure to handle.

THETIMES.CO.UK/ARCHIVE

Online knife sales

Sir, Your article on the availability of machetes and zombie weapons online (news, Apr 8) reminded me of my purchase of six steak knives last year. My age was requested and, although over 70, I am reluctant to supply my exact date of birth over the internet for security reasons so I made up a fictitious date which made me about a month younger. I received an email from the company to say that their search of my address showed a different birth date.

If this technology is available to tie steak knives to their owners (I was finally approved to buy them), surely it can be applied to more lethal items.
Jon Bunker
London W11

Mother knew best

Sir, I'm pleased to see that medical research has caught up with my mother ("Scientists strike gold in struggle against superbugs", Apr 8). In the 1950s if I or any of my siblings showed signs of an emerging stye on the eyelid, my mother would rub it with her wedding ring. The inflammation was gone by teatime.
Jane Wood
Didsbury, Greater Manchester

Entente cordiale

Sir, I was lucky enough to be sent to France on a school exchange (letter, Apr 7). The only pupils to benefit were the French who managed to improve their English.
Nicholas Morley
London W6

Waxing lyrical

Sir, I cannot understand why GPs would refuse to syringe ears (letters, April 7 & 8). It must be one of the most satisfying treatments a doctor can offer as the patient's symptoms are immediately relieved and the doctor and patient can then admire the offending wax in the bowl.
Peter Ellis, retired ENT surgeon
Frinton-on-Sea, Essex

It's not so cryptic

Mick Hodgkin outlined the differences between US and UK crosswords (Feedback, Apr 8), mainly that ours are more cryptic. Like Mick, I spoke to the American Crossword Puzzle Tournament and asked the reason for the different styles. A lady in the audience replied that it was "because you English are more devious".
Tim Moorey, Author of *How to Master The Times Crossword*
London EC1

Special editions

Sir, Caroline Clarke-Jervoise (letter, Apr 8) describes the *White Book* of civil litigation practice as a bargain at £929. No such bargains are to be had at the coalface of legal proceedings: a 500-page copy of the transcript of a five-day trial at Winchester crown court set us back £2,750.
Paul Turner
Rudloe, Wilts

Sir, Don't forget *Jane's Fighting Ships*, priced at £1,471 (letters, Apr 5, 6 & 8). I find our older copies very useful to reach the top shelf, but don't tell my husband.
Ann Saunders
Petersfield, Hants

Daily Universal Register

UK: Easter Monday bank holiday; state pension increase takes effect.
World: IMF and World Bank Group spring meetings begin; Irish Grand National.

Nature notes



Spring is breeding season for most of our birds, and it is common to find bits of eggshell on the ground. Sometimes — particularly if the egg has been neatly bisected in a ring — this is the result of a chick hatching; the parent bird will usually take the empty halves some distance from the nest before discarding them to avoid attracting predators. Others may have been broken into by gulls, corvids or other birds and these will leave a jagged hole with the chipped edges punched inwards; mammalian predators like rats and squirrels, often break the shell into fragments. MELISSA HARRISON

Birthdays today



Peter Morgan, *pictured*, screenwriter, *The Queen* (2006), *Frost/Nixon* (2008), *The Crown* (2016-23), 60; **Stig Abell**, broadcaster, Times Radio, and author, *Death Under a Little Sky*, editor and publisher of the Times Literary Supplement (2016-20), 43; **Prof Sir John Baker KC**, legal historian, 79; **Gordon Buchanan**, wildlife film-maker and presenter, *Cheetah Family & Me* (2021), 51; **Ed Byrne**, comedian, *Mock the Week*, 51; **Nicky Campbell**, BBC radio and TV presenter, 62; **Sophie Ellis-Bextor**, singer-songwriter, *Murder on the Dancefloor* (2001), *Wanderlust* (2014), 44; **Lesley Garrett**, soprano, *A North Country Lass* (2012), 68; **Anoushka Healy**, executive vice-president and chief strategy officer, News Corp, 51; **Rosemary Hill**, writer, *Time's Witness: History in the Age of Romanticism* (2021), 66; **Tim Hollingsworth**, chief executive, Sport England, British Paralympic Association (2011-18), 56; **Dolores Huerta**, US labour leader and civil rights activist, 93; **Charlie Hunnam**, actor, *Sons of Anarchy* (2008-14), 43; **Gloria Hunniford**, radio and TV presenter, 83; **Debora Kayembe**, human rights campaigner, rector of the University of Edinburgh, 48; **Vincent Kompany**, footballer, Belgium (2004-19) and Manchester City (2008-19), 37; **David Moorcroft**, middle and long-distance runner, chief executive, UK Athletics (1997-2007), 70; **Haley Joel Osment**, actor, *The Sixth Sense* (1999), 35; **Craig Overton**, cricketer, Somerset and England, and twin brother **Jamie**, Surrey and England, 29; **Daisy Ridley**, actress, the Star Wars film series, 31; **Dame Carol Robinson**, chemist, president, Royal Society of Chemistry (2018-20), the first female professor of chemistry at Oxford and Cambridge universities, 67; **Steven Seagal**, actor, *Under Siege* (1992), 71; **Paul Theroux**, writer, *The Great Railway Bazaar* (1975), 82; **Sir Rodney Walker**, sports administrator, chairman, London Marathon Charitable Trust, 80; **William Sackville, Earl De La Warr**, stockbroker and dairy farmer, 75; **Errollyn Wallen**, composer, *Mighty River* (2017), 65.

On this day

In **1849** the safety pin was patented by Walter Hunt of New York so he could pay off a $15 debt. He sold the rights for $400.

The last word

"I really think a champion is defined not by their wins but by how they can recover when they fall." Serena Williams, after winning the US Open tennis final in 2012

Care in the Community

Cuts in spending for training in social care are a false economy that will aggravate pressures in the health service. Politicians need to face the scale of the crisis

Pressures on healthcare will not be eased until the system of social care is fixed. Yet, as we report today, an acute shortage of hospital beds is being exacerbated because patients who are healthy enough to be discharged lack adequate care at home. Hence they stay put. Unfortunately the government's decision last week to reduce funding earmarked for training in social care exemplifies how hard it is to resolve the problem. An expedient to save costs in the short term is a false economy that will inevitably end up intensifying demands on the public purse and pressures on the National Health Service.

The government pledged in 2021 to invest at least £500 million over three years in training places for social care workers. That has now been reduced to £250 million. Though the Department of Health and Social Care insists it will give social care "the status it deserves", the subtext is unmistakable. Political capital accrues to a government that spends more on childcare, as Jeremy Hunt, the chancellor, announced in his budget last month, but social care is a Cinderella service: crucial but unloved and out of sight. Having served as health secretary and chaired the Commons health select committee, Mr Hunt knows the stakes. Boosting social care must be a cross-party cause.

Social care is highly labour-intensive. There is no quick technological fix to helping vulnerable people to cope with chronic physical, neurological or age-related conditions. Hence the number of employees in the sector, at about 1.5 million, roughly matches the NHS workforce. Yet the invaluable work they do is increasingly overwhelmed by the requirements of an ageing population and of younger adults with severe needs.

Funding has not kept pace with demand. Indeed, total spending in 2020 matched that of a decade earlier, despite significant increases in the number of elderly people. The balance in social care is paid for by the families of those in need. Beyond a certain level, these costs are punitive.

Hence the coalition government led by David Cameron appointed the economist Sir Andrew Dilnot to chair an independent commission to examine funding for social care. The review recommended that initial costs be paid for by the individual recipient, from their own resources or the sale of assets, but above £35,000 and after normal living costs they should be met by the state, through local authorities.

Allowing for inflation, that remains a sensible principle. For all the justified criticisms of Boris Johnson's tenure as prime minister, it was a step forward for his government to seek a lifetime cap (of £86,000) on the amount anyone had to pay for personal care. The resources envisaged for such a scheme, at some £1.8 billion, to be raised notably by means of a health and social care levy paid in national insurance contributions, may not have been adequate, especially given the need to train and recruit staff in the sector. But at least the problem was explicitly acknowledged. Now, by its ill-conceived economies, the government appears to be hoping the crisis will go away of its own accord.

To commit to an adequate system of social care will admittedly win few votes and risks losing many. Theresa May stumbled badly in the Conservative campaign for the 2017 election, which the party had seemed on course to win easily, by making well-intentioned proposals that her opponents were able to depict as a "dementia tax".

Yet the problem of fixing social care, given an ageing population and special needs (notably in learning) among working-age people, will daunt governments of any complexion over the next decade. Economists estimate that spending will need to grow by about 4 per cent annually merely to keep pace with current levels. Candour and consensus are far preferable to a tacit agreement to keep silent about the scale of the task.

Kremlin Kidnapping

The Putin regime's abduction of Ukrainian children demands justice

Russia's assault on Ukraine is not an arcane border dispute. It is an attempt to suppress and extirpate a nation. The evidence lies in the brutality meted out to Ukraine's population, through indiscriminate bombing of hospitals, schools and residential areas, as well as shooting and maiming civilians at close quarters. Most of all it is evident in a crime so barbarous that it is hard to find a modern counterpart: since the invasion began in February last year, Russian forces have been systematically abducting and deporting Ukrainian children.

The torment of parents whose children are kidnapped can scarcely be imagined. It is not arbitrary cruelty but a deliberate attempt to indoctrinate children into the notion that Ukrainian nationality is a bogus construct. It is, in the literal sense set out in the UN convention of 1948, an act of genocide. And it underlines the need for the Putin regime to be held to account at a war crimes tribunal, however long it takes and whatever the logistical difficulties in arraigning its leading figures.

Reliable statistics are elusive but the government in Kyiv claims that some 19,500 Ukrainian children have been kidnapped and transported to Russia for adoption. It is heartening that some have been reunited with their families owing to the efforts of a charity, Save Ukraine. The fortitude of mothers who, after long journeys, withstood long interrogations by Russian security services in order to secure their children's release is deeply moving. But despite such heroism, the numbers of families that have been restored are meagre.

The latest rescue mission, which we report today, freed 31 children, bringing the total to about 360. Thousands remain trapped in Crimea, illegally annexed by the Putin regime in 2014, or Russia, probably forever separated from their parents and exiled from their homeland.

There is a type of sophistry in international affairs that will only classify as genocide the deliberate annihilation of an ethnic, national or religious minority. Destruction of a people encompasses far more than this: it can include the suppression of language and the deprivation of the means of a community to reproduce itself. This is what Russia's depredations against Ukraine involve. And it is a war crime of the utmost gravity.

History provides many such lessons. Benjamin Ferencz, who as a young lawyer helped to bring Nazi war criminals to justice at the Nuremberg trials in 1945, died last week at the age of 103. With his passing, the direct experience of prosecuting Nazi crimes against humanity has slipped beyond human memory. Periodically (and even at the time) some faulted the tribunal as an exercise in "victors' justice". That was false. It was, rather, an imperfect but vital historical accounting for barbarous crimes and thereby an instrument for reconciliation between nations and peoples.

On the same principle, ad hoc international tribunals for the conflicts in Bosnia and Rwanda were established by the United Nations in the 1990s, to be succeeded by a permanent tribunal, the International Criminal Court (ICC). The ICC issued an arrest warrant last month for Vladimir Putin on grounds of these child abductions. If the Russian president is forever confined to his own country for fear of arrest and transportation to the Hague, he may escape justice but the indictment will stand. And the symbolism of an embattled autocrat will remain a reminder of universal standards of jurisprudence and civilised conduct.

En Garde!

A new adaptation of The Three Musketeers augurs well for French cinema

The American humorist Dorothy Parker wrote of two familial mainstays of 19th-century European literature: "Although I work, and seldom cease, / At Dumas *père* and Dumas *fils*, / Alas, I cannot make me care / For Dumas *fils* and Dumas *père*."

She was perhaps unkind. And aficionados of French culture will be hoping for a more enthusiastic popular response to a new adaptation of the most famous novel by the elder Alexandre Dumas, known in English as *The Three Musketeers*.

The stakes are high. Last year, for the first time, not a single French film featured among the top ten hits judged by box-office takings. American films, especially those featuring action heroes, dominated. Initial reviews of the new film, directed by Martin Bourboulon, have been enthusiastic.

The raw material, in which the young and naive Charles D'Artagnan of Gascony arrives in Paris in 1627 to become a musketeer and serve the King, could hardly be better crafted for a swashbuckling epic. The American director Richard Lester found great success in the early 1970s with two films based on the same novel, and shot at the same time. Readers of a certain age will recall that when Constance Bonacieux, played by Raquel Welch, is abducted, the dashing D'Artagnan (played by Michael York) declares with unbelievable hesitancy to the other musketeers: "I love her – I think."

The possibilities for such barbed dialogue are extensive in the hands of a capable director and cast, and French-language historical dramas have captured international hearts before. A 1990 adaptation of the Edmond Rostand play *Cyrano de Bergerac*, starring Gérard Depardieu, was a deserved international hit, its poetry aided in the English-speaking market by limpid subtitles written by Anthony Burgess. The new adaptation of the musketeers' exploits too deserves success, for its merits and national symbolism.

World

Kyiv poised to launch make-or-break offensive

Spring assault may be the last chance to push back Putin's forces, writes **Richard Spencer** from Kherson





EVGENIY MALOLETKA/AP

Ukrainian forces will attempt to replicate their success in Kharkiv and Kherson

Those who know where it will happen and when are not saying. Those who speculate, do not know.

But from the top of the military apparatus to the men and women on the front lines, everyone says a Ukrainian counter-offensive is coming. President Zelensky wants to capitalise on high morale after his army's successes of late last year, and exploit western enthusiasm to send arms.

Across the long front line, the guns are starting to fall silent. But that does not mean there is peace. "The pace of shelling has lowered dramatically over the last two months," said Lieutenant Dmytro Pletenchuk, a spokesman for the Ukrainian army's southern command. "They are down to 200-300 shells per day from 2,000-3,000, just on the Kherson front."

For both sides, with the strange and violent exception of the endless battle for Bakhmut, the military emphasis is on preserving ammunition without showing signs of weakness, or giving away the big secret of fresh force.

Western military planners believe that the Ukrainian army has enough ammunition for one big push this year



— so long as it is used wisely and not according to the old "firewall tactics" of the Soviet era: continuous, intensive bombardment.

If the push does not work, they say there will be enough to resume the defensive posture the Ukrainian side has taken since last year's two breakthroughs, when it recaptured southern Kharkiv province in September and Kherson city in November. But there will not be enough for a second push, and whether there will be a further round of rearmament by Ukraine's western allies is an open question.

Western Europe, its armies under-resourced and under-funded, is running out of supplies itself. The Biden administration has competing priorities — in the Far East and, above all, in fighting the presidential election against a resurgent Donald Trump.

That gives the counter-offensive, whenever it comes, a make-or-break feel. Those in Europe and the US who have held off urging fresh negotiations, almost certainly involving land-for-peace, will begin to speak up again if another stalemate looms.

Land for peace is precisely the offer rejected by Zelensky. "Do you suggest that we give up our territory?" asked Oleksiy Danilov, his national security adviser, in an interview. "Too many Ukrainians have already died to make compromise acceptable. That territory is covered with the blood of our heroes."

Everything therefore depends on where the thrust comes and how it is executed. It is expected later this month or next, according to the defence minister, Oleksiy Reznikov, although Danilov pointed out that this statement could be intended to mislead.

The most likely starting point, although this could have also been indicated by way of deception, is between Kherson and the industrial city of Zaporizhzhya, where Ukrainian forces are positioned on the east side of the Dnipro river but before the killing grounds of the Donbas start.

A drive south that is as successful as the Kharkiv and Kherson offensives last year could conceivably reach the Black Sea at or near the city of Melitopol, and cut the Russian occupation territory in two. It would also cut off the land route to Crimea, in Russia's view the most important of its annexed conquests. Whether an assault on the heavily defended peninsula would follow is another matter, but it would be a substantial bargaining chip if Ukraine decided to offer talks on its own terms.

The theory of the Zaporizhzhya attack is convincing. But no one thinks that the Kharkiv offensive, when some of the weaker units of the Russian army were isolated and fled, can be repeated. "There are lots of enemy troops and they are well dug in," said Sergeant Vanya, 26, from an intelligence unit. Vanya, who spoke using only his first name in accordance with standard practice for lower-ranking soldiers, was insistent that many of the widely held conclusions about Russian military weaknesses, derived from their defeats this year, were over-optimistic.

Western analysts have talked of Russia's dependence on old-fashioned Soviet training manuals, compared with the more sophisticated training Ukrainian officers have received from the West in the past eight years.

Even now, senior Ukrainian officers are in Germany being instructed in Nato's view of how best to deploy their western battle tanks — Challenger 2s from Britain, Abrams from the US, Leopards from western Europe. This should not be according to the Second World War system of mass tank warfare, but as spearheads.

But Vanya said "Soviet" was neither necessarily bad nor the only option the Russians had available. "Everyone says they all use Soviet manuals but they aren't necessarily wrong to do so," he said, speaking from experience. "They are based on previous successes. We are certainly fighting a well-trained army.

"Russia actually does train on Nato manuals," he said. "There are a number of nerds here who translate Nato manuals into Ukrainian. The Russians then take them and translate them into Russian. So they are using them. The Russians are not fools. They have brigade commanders who are not afraid to take their own decisions by themselves."

The Ukrainians believe that in the coming offensive they have the advantage in intelligence — already seen in that the Russian artillery now regularly fires from further behind the lines. Ukrainians are fighting on their own land, and say they still have informers giving them targeting co-ordinates.

Russia, though, has the advantage that Ukraine has had in the winter fighting — being dug in, and defending.

Zelensky seems determined to press ahead, however. Soldiers are confident but also insistent that whatever happens the war will go on.

"This counter-offensive is going to be among the most important military operations in history," Vanya said. "But is it a turning point? Maybe it doesn't work like that. Of course everyone wants a quick victory. But we have to understand that a third of our territory is occupied and we have to be prepared for a long game. We are going to have a lot of turning points."

Unless Ukraine claims victory, Russia will be back, Edward Lucas, page 24

Leaks reveal 'real-time' spying

Alistair Dawber

The US Department of Justice has begun an investigation into the apparent leak of secret intelligence documents that include details of Russia's operations in Ukraine.

While the authenticity of the papers has not been confirmed by Washington, officials say they are consistent with CIA World Intelligence Review reports that are shared at high levels within the White House, Pentagon and State Department.

One intelligence source told The Washington Post that some of the information appeared to have been manipulated to show fewer Russian losses than were believed to be the case.

The information was leaked on social media sites at the end of last week and shows that the US has apparently gained access to highly sensitive Russian intelligence.

It shows that the Kremlin and the Russian military are struggling to keep on top of operations in the war and also that the US has real-time access to military planners' targets.

It means that the US is able to warn its Ukrainian allies about planned Russian missile strikes.

The source of the information remains unknown, but also indicates that the US is spying on Ukrainian military commanders too. It suggests that the Ukrainian army is desperately short of weapons and other munitions.

Defence analysts say that any breach of internal classified US documents would be both damaging and potentially embarrassing to Washington. In addition, the leak would prove valuable to Moscow by showing how deeply US intelligence has penetrated parts of the Russian military apparatus.

Russia or pro-Russian elements are probably behind a leak of the classified documents, several US officials told Reuters.

Mick Mulroy, a former senior Pentagon official, told The New York Times: "As many of these were pictures of documents, it appears that it was a deliberate leak done by someone that wished to damage the Ukraine, US and Nato efforts."

Mike Gallagher, a Republican congressman from Wisconsin and member of the House intelligence committee, said: "We are talking about things that could damage our national security and CIA efforts in Europe and around the world."



Mothers' joy as Russians free children

Tom Parfitt

Ukrainian mothers have been reunited with children removed to Russian territory by invading forces after a hazardous and stressful operation that stretched across four countries.

The mothers travelled to Russia and Moscow-controlled Crimea, enduring sleepless nights and a 13-hour interrogation by officers of Russia's Federal Security Service in order to secure their children's release.

Thirty-one children crossed the border from Belarus to Ukraine in the cli-

All for one in French riposte to US cinema
Page 31



Can Erdogan ever fill Turkey's newest mosque?
Page 32



VALENTYN OGIRENKO/REUTERS



Ukrainian mothers who collected their abducted children included Natalia Rakk, above, with her 13-year-old daughter Dasha, who was taken from the Russian-occupied city of Kherson last year. Natalia said it was "heartbreaking" to see children who were not being reunited with their families left "crying behind the fence". The Ukrainian authorities estimate almost 20,000 children have been illegally taken to Russia



max of the operation, organised by Save Ukraine, a charity.

The International Criminal Court issued an arrest warrant for President Putin last month because of his alleged involvement in abductions of children from Ukraine. Russia claims they were removed from the war zone for their own safety.

Ukraine estimates that 19,500 children have been illegally deported to Russia. The latest rescue mission brings the number who have been returned to about 360.

The children who returned over the weekend were taken from the Kharkiv and Kherson regions. Footage showed them dragging suitcases and carrying bags towards a waiting bus. One child had a large, yellow soft toy.

Dasha Rakk, 13, said she and her twin sister had initially agreed to go to a holiday camp in Crimea for "a few weeks" from the Russian-occupied city of Kherson last year. But they began to cry when they were told they would be staying longer.

Natalia, Dasha's mother, said she had travelled from Ukraine to Crimea via Poland, Belarus and Moscow to get her daughters. "It was terribly difficult but we kept on going, we did not sleep at nights [properly], we slept sitting up," she said, describing her journey to the camp. "It was heartbreaking to look at children left behind who were crying behind the fence."

Mykola Kuleba, head of Save Ukraine, said it had welcomed home 31 children "illegally taken by Russians from occupied territories". He said there had also been a tragedy: "Unfortunately, a grandmother who was to bring home her two grandchildren died from the stress she experienced. The woman's heart couldn't take it."

A boy named Vitaly said at a briefing in Kyiv after the children's release that he and others were kept for months in a Russian summer camp and told their parents no longer wanted them. "We were treated like animals. We were closed in a separate building," said Vitaly, whose age was unclear.

Last month Save Ukraine returned 17 children to Ukrainian government-controlled territory. One was a 16-year-old non-verbal boy with autism, named Sasha Mazur. His mother, Olga Mazur, told Verstka Media that he was held at a psychiatric hospital in the Crimean city of Simferopol and at a residential care facility. She said conditions at the care home looked "superb" when she arrived but she did not know what the long-term effect of months without contact with his family would be.

"Psychologists say it will be at least three weeks before the other children who have returned start communicating about what really happened to them," she said. "Of course, my boy can't say a word."

A Putin regime cruelty that demands justice, leading article, page 27

Abortion pill ban is new battleground in US pro-life crusade

United States
Alistair Dawber Washington

Conflicting judicial decisions in two US states have thrown the use of abortion pills into doubt, teeing up another controversial decision for the Supreme Court.

On Friday evening a federal judge in Texas, Matthew Kacsmaryk, ordered a nationwide ban on mifepristone, one of two drugs taken in combination to end pregnancies. It is used in more than half of abortions in the US.

The decision by Kacsmaryk, a judge appointed during Donald Trump's presidency, provoked outrage among pro-choice groups. The Biden administration immediately responded by saying it would challenge the ruling in a higher court.

The judge further angered those campaigning to maintain access to terminations by referring to abortion providers as "abortionists" and saying the drug was used to "kill the unborn human".

Merrick Garland, the attorney-general, has asked an appeals court to stay the Texas decision until the issue is settled. Any overturning of Kacsmaryk's decision will lead to counter challenges, meaning the Supreme Court will be asked to be the final arbiter.

In contrast, a judge in Washington state ruled on Friday that mifepristone was "safe and legal" and that the Food and Drug Administration (FDA) must preserve access to it in more than a dozen states. District Judge Thomas Rice, a Barack Obama appointee, made the decision in a case brought by several states where abortion is legal.

Mifepristone remained legal for now, Alexis McGill Johnson, the head of the abortion provider and advocacy group Planned Parenthood, said. "Everyone should have the right to access safe and effective medication that has been approved by the FDA," she said. "[The] unprecedented decision by a federal district court in Texas threatens this right."

Groups like hers know, however, that the Supreme Court could well side with those who want to ban the abortion pill. In June it overturned almost 50 years of abortion access when it ruled that Roe v Wade, a case that enshrined the right to a termination, was unconstitutional.

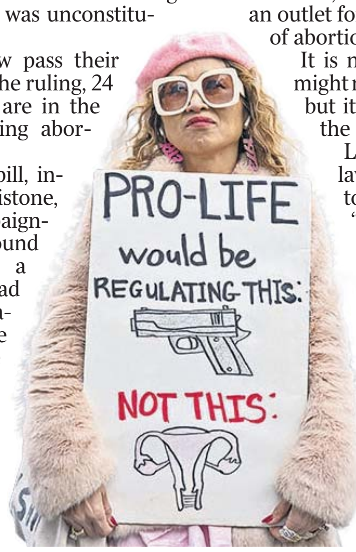
States can now pass their own laws. Since the ruling, 24 have banned or are in the process of banning abortion access.

The abortion pill, including mifepristone, was seen by campaigners as a way around restrictions. "As a person who's had multiple medication abortions, we know that the medication itself is safe and effective," said Emma Hernandez, who works for We Testify, an outlet for people to give accounts of abortion.

It is not clear when the issue might reach the Supreme Court, but it could decide to take up the case as an emergency.

Lawrence Gostin, a health law specialist at Georgetown University, said: "The Supreme Court now has a conservative super-majority that has already overturned the constitutional right to abortion. This is a perilous moment for American women."

Women's March, which has been organising demonstrations in support of abortion access, has called for a nationwide rally on Saturday.



Pro-choice activists took to the streets after the Texas ruling

DeSantis has $110m ready for campaign

Alistair Dawber

Ron DeSantis has raised more than $110 million from donors ahead of an expected run for the White House in next year's presidential election.

The money — raised by political committees backing him to seek the Republican Party nomination — has been brought in despite the Florida governor, 44, not yet confirming that he plans to enter the race.

"He is in the most enviable financial position of any candidate," Mike Murphy, a Republican strategist, told The New York Times. "[Yet] there are questions in Republican circles about DeSantis's candidate skills — can he make the transition from being the governor of a Republican state, where you exist on people's TV screens, to the microscope of New Hampshire and Iowa?"

Donald Trump, the former president and front runner in the race, is reported to have raised about $12 million in the three weeks since news broke that he was to be indicted in a case involving hush money paid to the former porn actress Stormy Daniels, with whom he allegedly had a sexual relationship. He was indicted in Manhattan last week.

His main fundraising groups gathered about $46 million in the second half of last year, less than the roughly $50 million they raised in the same period of 2021, according to filings by WinRed, the main Republican platform for online fundraising.

World

Mongolians challenge rise of rich elite

Mongolia
Richard Lloyd Parry Ulan Bator

It was 30C below zero in Ulan Bator and when the tumult erupted, nobody saw it coming. There was no big announcement or call to arms. People arrived individually or in small groups, as word spread on social media; at the peak, there were 20,000 people, most of them young, half filling the vast Sukhbaatar Square in the city centre. They stayed for almost three weeks.

They carried banners with slogans such as "Name the guilty!" and "Do your job!" Groups slept out overnight, held hunger strikes and streaked in their underwear in the arctic temperatures. It was the longest and biggest political protest in Mongolia for years. At one point, protesters broke windows in a thwarted attempt to storm the state palace. But when it came to an end two days before Christmas last year, nothing obvious had been achieved.

"It started so strongly," said Oyunsuren Damdinsuren, a lecturer in international relations at the National University of Mongolia. "Our democracy is receding. Corruption is worsening under this government. But the protests were so disorganised. In the end it fizzled." Many believe it is only a matter of time before they return.

Until recently, Mongolia did not look like a candidate for democratic crisis — compared with some of its neighbours. It has achieved much since a peaceful revolution brought an end to seven decades of communist rule in 1990, weeks after the fall of the Berlin Wall.

Despite being sandwiched between huge, authoritarian neighbours, Russia and China, Mongolians have established a genuine democracy, tested by repeated elections and changes of government. New industries such as mining have provided alternatives to herding and agriculture. The population of Ulan Bator has grown from 570,000 in 1990 to 1.7 million.

The country is relatively free of the violent and organised crime that plagues many former satellites of the Soviet Union. "No one is shooting one another — there are no mafia-like structures," said Julian Dierkes, a professor and Mongolia expert at the University of British Columbia. "If you had a check list, you'd say that Mongolia is doing well, particularly in an era of democratic backsliding around the world, and in a neighbourhood that is not friendly to democracy."


Protesters brave the chill in Ulan Bator

But with the new wealth have come pollution, inequality and corruption. Late last year, it emerged that a state coalmining company, Erdenes Tavan Tolgoi, had lost track of 385,000 tonnes of coal sent for sale to China in lorries that arrived empty. The implication — embezzlement by state executives — is what precipitated the demonstrations.

The crowds quickly took up other problems, including pollution, high taxes and inequality. When eight officials were arrested on suspicion of the coal theft the protests continued. "It was about more than just the coal," said Bat-Ochir Batbayar, who emerged as a leader and spokesman for the protest.

Ulan Bator's middle class of teachers, doctors and other professionals is struggling and marginalised in a city increasingly dominated by a rich elite.

"In state hospitals, it's common to bribe a doctor when you give birth — if not, you'll get worse treatment," Oyunsuren said. "Many mothers complain but doctors' salaries are ridiculously low. The biggest corruption is in the courts. In Mongolia, if you're rich you'll enjoy impunity. It's engrained at every level and these people don't even try to hide it. If you visit any ministry you'll see a lot of Jeeps. These people earn less than a university professor, officially, but they live in one million dollar villas, and they're not even ashamed."

One of the problems is politics. The government is run by the Mongolian People's Party, successor to the state socialist party, a dictatorship in the Soviet era. These days it is elected in polls that are judged by independent monitors to be free and fair overall.

But the opposition Democratic Party is bitterly divided between factions to the point of being dysfunctional. Thus, Mongolia is a democracy but with only one credible party. Government and opposition are distinguished by their leaders, rather than by ideologies.

Many young people, even the best educated, leave for menial but relatively well paid jobs, in South Korea or Japan, in what Oyunsuren calls "a brain waste, as well as a brain drain". As the protests showed, there is growing disaffection among those who remain.

TOMOHIRO OHSUMI/GETTY IMAGES


High-flyers The White Heron Dance was first performed in Japan in the eighth century and revived in the 1960s. It is said to bring good luck and a bumper harvest

US submarine sent to deter Iranian attacks

Egypt
Michael Evans

The US has revealed that it has a nuclear-powered guided-missile submarine in the Middle East. The unusual admission follows warnings of imminent Iranian attacks on Israeli cargo ships in the Gulf.

USS Florida, which is armed with 154 Tomahawk land-attack cruise missiles and underwater vehicles, came through the Suez Canal on Friday and is acting as a deterrent to Iran.

Intelligence reports have indicated that the Islamic Revolutionary Guard Corps (IRGC) is planning to use armed drones to attack Israeli shipping in retaliation for Israeli strikes in Syria in which two IRGC members were killed.

The aircraft carrier, USS George HW Bush, has also had its tour in the region extended after attacks last month on American troops in northern Syria, which killed a US contractor and injured a dozen troops. Iran was blamed.

The official announcement of its presence was unusual because the location of submarines is generally classified. "Recent events … prompted us to remind regional mariners to remain vigilant," Commander Timothy Hawkins, who is the spokesman for the US 5th Fleet, said.

Killer who faked own death is arrested

Tanzania
Tom Collins

A rapist and murderer who escaped a South African prison by faking his own death has been arrested in Tanzania, ending a continent-wide hunt.

Thabo Bester, known as the Facebook Rapist, was on the run for more than a year after apparently dying in a fire in his cell in Bloemfontein.

However, reported sightings led the authorities to test the corpse, which was that of a different person, who had died from a heavy blow to the head.

It is thought that Bester may have murdered another inmate, set the corpse alight and escaped with the help of the guards working for the British security company G4S. Three employees were reportedly dismissed over the incident.

Bester, 34, was arrested with his girlfriend and a third suspect. He was found guilty in 2012 of the rape and the murder of another girlfriend, Nomfundo Tyhulu, a year after being convicted of the rape and robbery of two women.

In a confession he said he "did not know why" he killed Tyhulu, who was stabbed in the chest on a holiday in Cape Town. "She was a good friend. I knew her family. She was a good person. She believed in me," he said in Western Cape High Court.

Bester was sentenced to 25 years for the murder, a term running concurrently with a 50-year sentence for other crimes. Bester is known as the Facebook Rapist for using the social media site to lure women to his house with the promise of modelling jobs.

Doubts about his death surfaced last year after local media reported sightings of him after the supposed self-immolation.

He was spotted in a neighbourhood of Johannesburg with his wife, Nandipha Magudumana, who had collected the body from the prison after he faked his death.

His escape prompted outrage in South Africa where sexual assault crimes often go unpunished. The country was formerly named by Interpol as the "rape capital of the world".

Mullahs use spy cameras to catch hijab refuseniks

Iran
Melanie Swan

Iran has launched a nationwide CCTV surveillance operation to catch women refusing to wear the Islamic head covering after a nationwide uprising.

Women have been defying the regime since September, when Mahsa Amini died while being held by the Iranian morality police. She had been arrested for showing some of her hair.

Women can now be seen in public places without the hijab, and many have burnt them in public.

From now on images of women without the hijab, in defiance of Iran's strict dress code, will be sent directly to police. After an initial warning, women risk prosecution and fines of £50,000.

Police say that "smart cameras" are in place "to prevent tension and conflict in establishing the hijab law", beefing up the country's vast AI and facial recognition network to suppress dissent. Traffic cameras will also be used.

Since September more than 500 people have been killed in clashes with security forces and 20,000 have been arrested, according to Human Rights Activists of Iran, based in the US. Some protesters have been executed.

All for one and one for all in screen war with US



ALAMY



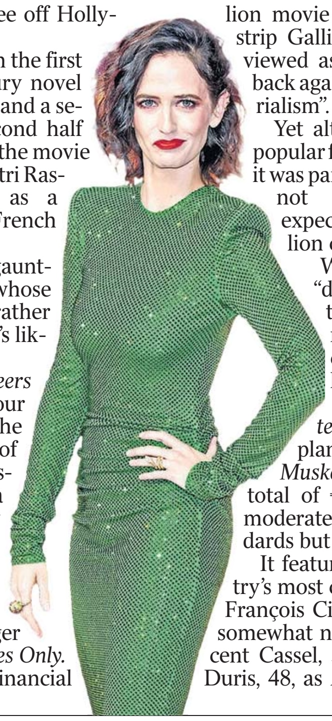
The first of the two-part Three Musketeers saga drew almost 200,000 people on its first day. Among the stars are Eva Green as Milady, right, and in 2019, left

France

Adam Sage Paris

With despondency and division deepening in France amid protests against President Macron's pension reform, the country needed a saviour to lift the mood. Step forward D'Artagnan.

The swashbuckling swordsman was called into action last week in a blockbuster adaptation of *The Three Musketeers*, released in cinemas on the back of hopes that it would see off Hollywood.



With a plot based on the first half of the 19th-century novel by Alexandre Dumas, and a sequel covering the second half due out in December, the movie was described by Dimitri Rassam, the producer, as a chance to "celebrate French panache".

He threw down the gauntlet to his US rivals, whose films have been doing rather too well for the nation's liking in recent months.

"*The Three Musketeers* is the response of our French mythology to the American mythology of superheroes," said Rassam, 41, the scion of a film-making dynasty and the son of Carole Bouquet, the actress who played Melina Havelock, the Bond girl alongside Roger Moore in *For Your Eyes Only*.

Les Echos, the financial newspaper, said the aim was to "rival Marvel".

In a country that views cinema as a core part of its cultural identity — and gives the sector about €1 billion a year in subsidies — the stakes are high.

Last year no French film got into the top ten in terms of box office takings in France for the first time in 33 years as American movies dominated.

The release in January of *Asterix & Obelix: The Middle Kingdom*, a €65 million movie featuring the comic-strip Gallic warrior, was widely viewed as the start of a fight-back against US "cultural imperialism".

Yet although it is the most popular film this year in France, it was panned by critics and has not done as well as expected, attracting 4.5 million cinemagoers to date.

With Asterix proving a "damp squib", according to Libération, D'Artagnan has been left to carry the nation's hopes.

The Three Musketeers: D'Artagnan and its planned sequel, *The Three Musketeers: Milady*, cost a total of €72 million, which is moderate by American standards but a lot for Europe.

It features some of the country's most celebrated actors, with François Civil, 33, as a brave and somewhat naive D'Artagnan; Vincent Cassel, 56, as Athos; Romain Duris, 48, as Aramis; and Pio Marmaï, 38, as Porthos. Eva Green, 42, the actress who starred alongside Daniel Craig in the James Bond film *Casino Royale*, is cast as the scheming Milady. Jacob Fortune-Lloyd, 35, a British actor, plays the Duke of Buckingham.

The movie is a long way from France's intellectual arthouse traditions. Instead, it offers intrigue, duels, death and love in the 17th century, when the country was divided between Protestants and Catholics, facing an English invasion and led by the weak Louis XIII — a timely reminder, perhaps, that Macron is not the first head of state to find his back against the wall.

The reviews have mostly been positive, with Le Monde describing it as a "mixture of Indiana Jones, a western and the Tour de France".

However, some reviewers have complained that Martin Bourboulon, the director, has not been entirely faithful to the novel, and Le Figaro was snotty about his decision to make Porthos bisexual, for example.

Bourboulon's challenge was to put his own stamp on Dumas, whose works have been adapted for film and television at least 646 times — making them among the most widely screened of any author. The adaptations of *The Three Musketeers* include a 1970s' Italian spaghetti western and a 1950s' German porn movie. D'Artagnan has been played by such actors as Gene Kelly, John Wayne and Volodymyr Zelensky, who starred in a Ukrainian musical version in 2005 before entering politics. As recently as last month, a low budget British adaptation was released with Malachi Pullar-Latchman as the Dumas hero.

The French blockbuster got off to an encouraging start, and was seen by 197,224 people on the day of its release on Wednesday. But that might not suffice to see off American invaders. *The Super Mario Bros. Movie* was seen by 281,442 people that day in France.

Hurrah for this swashbuckling epic, leading article, page 27

Big test for Macron's pension reform

Charles Bremner Paris

After weeks of strikes and protests, President Macron's pension reform will reach a decisive moment this week when the top constitutional body rules whether it conforms with the law or strikes all or part of it down.

Full approval by the nine so-called "wise people", led by Laurent Fabius, the former left-wing prime minister, would pave the way for enactment of the law that was last month passed by executive order, instead of a parliamentary vote that Macron believed his government would lose.

The president, now facing turbulence in his own administration over the reform, is determined to turn the page and believes the resistance will subside once the retirement age is moved up to 64 from 62, his aides say.

The council could rule that the decree method, covered by article 49-3 of the constitution, was not applicable to the reform, and invalidate the legislation. It could also reject other aspects of the reform, forcing Macron to modify or abandon a move that has caused his biggest political storm since the uprising by the *gilets jaunes* (yellow vests) grassroots protest movement five years ago.



Emmanuel Macron wants to raise the French retirement age from 62 to 64

With nearly 70 per cent of the country opposed to the changes and angry about the method used to implement them, trade unions and the left and hard-right parliamentary opposition say they will continue campaigning to force Macron to abandon the legislation even if the council says that the retirement bill is constitutional.

"We have to continue mobilising until the end, until the government understands there is no way out other than withdrawing this reform," Sophie Binet, leader of the militant left-wing CGT trade union, said. "We can't move on to anything else until this reform is repealed."

The unions will stage their 12th day of strikes and action on the eve of the constitutional ruling on Thursday, with hundreds of thousands expected to take to the streets. Protest numbers and public sector strikes have waned over the past three "days of mobilisation", which have involved outbreaks of violence in Paris and other cities.

Macron's determination to face down the fierce and broad public rejection of the new retirement age has led to claims by opponents that he has cast the country into turmoil. Laurent Berger, leader of the moderate CFDT union, the country's biggest, said Macron had plunged France into a political crisis.

French traffic lights turn green for lawful drivers

Charles Bremner

French drivers who do not speed through towns and villages are being "rewarded" by traffic lights that turn green for them while they remain red for vehicles approaching over the limit.

The so-called "feus récompense" (reward traffic lights), a method pioneered in Spain and adopted elsewhere in Europe over the past decade, are being used to tame traffic by encouraging law abiders rather than punishing speeders with automatic fines.

The traffic light is normally at red but turns green when a camera detects vehicles arriving at speeds under the 30km/h (19 mph) or 50km/h (31mph) limit in built-up areas. Drivers who ignore the red light are subject to the standard €135 fine for failing to obey the rules.

Councils across France, including some suburbs of Paris, are installing the devices as a less expensive alternative to traffic chicanes and speed bumps, which have been used in the past 20 years to make drivers obey speed limits when going through small towns and villages.

Villages that have "advisory" cameras which display the speed of oncoming vehicles find that more than 80 per cent are above the limit.

Before 2021 hundreds of villages had installed their own "Spanish lights", as they were known. They were declared illegal because they were fixed at green and turned red to halt speeders, which was deemed to be discriminatory.

A 2021 government ruling allowed the lights to be installed if their default colour was red, with the switch to green seen as a "reward".

In Maisnil, a northern village between Amiens and Lille, one of the traffic light sets has slowed the traffic by between 8km/h and 15km/h, Michel Borrewater, the mayor, said.

He told La Voix du Nord regional newspaper: "I have received only one letter from an unhappy resident who told me that he had to speed up again after the traffic light."

World

FROM OUR CORRESPONDENT

Turkey's newest mosque can hold 10,000 but despite President Erdogan's attempts to Islamify the nation it is unlikely to be filled

Hannah Lucinda Smith
DIYARBAKIR





The first things that hit you as you enter Turkey's newest mosque are the smells of fresh paint and newly laid carpet. The second is its size.

The indoor space of the Diyarbakir Central Mosque, which opens this month, reaches 30m from the floor to the crown of its octagonal dome, an enveloping expanse of turquoise, gold and various shades of rich blue, embellished with stylised Arabic calligraphy. There is space for 10,000 people to pray inside and an additional 15,000 in the grounds outside. The complex also houses a conference centre, youth centre and exhibition hall, and an underground car park with 500 spaces. Its total cost ran to £19 million, paid for by businessmen although President Erdogan officiated at the laying of its foundation stone in April 2017. Its builder has been winning state tenders since the turn of the millennium, the moment when Erdogan came to power with his AK Party. But even the mosque's project manager admits it will rarely be filled.

"It is not entirely for need. It is more a symbol of a civilisation," Huseyin Icoz said in his temporary office building on the edge of the site. "In our civilisation Islam was always here. This mosque will leave a heritage, in the future and for ever."



HANNAH LUCINDA SMITH FOR THE TIMES



Diyarbakir's new mosque is one of 20,000 built since President Erdogan took office 20 years ago

From the outside the mosque rises incongruously like a concrete spaceship. Over the past decade the city, de facto capital of Turkey's Kurdish-majority southeast, has been on the front line of Erdogan's mounting crackdown on Kurdish activism, politics and militancy. Much of the historic centre was destroyed in fighting between Turkish security forces and the Kurdish separatist militia, the PKK, in 2015-16. The HDP, the Kurdish-rooted party that won 65.5 per cent of the vote in Diyarbakir in the last national elections in 2018, is facing a closure case and all of its elected mayors have been removed from office by the central government.

The new mosque covers 28,000m² in the very centre of Diyarbakir, next to the city municipality, military housing ringed by razor wire and a shopping centre that collapsed in the earthquakes in February.

About 20,000 new mosques have appeared across Turkey during President Erdogan's 20 years in power. Some are tiny and built in previously mosque-less villages, while others have been added to almost every new state building: airports, new housing schemes and government complexes. At the other end of the scale are the mega-mosques, such as Diyarbakir's latest addition, which have been built on prime spots in nearly every big city in the country, with several more overseas in the Balkans, the Middle East and Europe.

While attending a Nato meeting in the UK in 2019, Erdogan opened the Cambridge Central Mosque, built and funded mostly by his government. In Turkey new mosques are the most visible signs of his attempts to Islamise his country, which have largely failed. Despite a massive expansion of religious schools, punishing taxes on alcohol and huge budgets for the Diyanet, the state body that administers Islamic affairs, attendances have barely changed.

Few places are less interested than Diyarbakir: while there are conservative parts to its society, the HDP promotes secularist, feminist values, and young urban Kurds are rarely practising Muslims. Icoz, like many Turks, takes a pragmatic view of his religion: he fasts for Ramadan but never prays or attends mosque and is more enthusiastic about the profane aspects of his project — its size, ambition and the fact that it will tower over the city for centuries to come — than whether it will bring Diyabakir's people closer to God. He is phlegmatic, too, on whether the mosque building spree will continue should Erdogan lose in elections next month, bringing 20 years of state Islamism to a close.

"I don't know whether it will continue," he says. "When the Turkish republic was first founded it wanted integration with the West. We don't know how the culture will change. Nobody ever built Pyramids again after the ancient Egyptians, but they have remained."

In small offices a mile away, on a rundown street it shares with bars, grocers and throngs of Diyarbakir shoppers, the HDP was launching its election campaign as Icoz oversaw the last touches to the mosque.

In order to swerve its looming closure case, the HDP is running an entirely new set of candidates for the parliamentary elections, under a new party banner: Green Left. The new logo is similar in style and colours to the old. Mervan Yildiz, the party's secretary in Diyarbakir, says the Kurds are used to working around regimes that squeeze them out of all political spaces.

"This government is in all institutions now with its ideology. In the health system, education, everywhere," she said. "This election is a decision on whether to continue with fascism or not."

Avalanche kills four ski hikers in Alps

France
Charles Bremner Paris

At least four ski hikers were killed in an avalanche high in the French Alps yesterday, while fears are growing for two others who are missing.

Last night floodlit rescue efforts continued for the missing pair above Les Contamines-Montjoie, a resort between Chamonix and Megève, near Mont Blanc. Nine more people were swept away but survived the season's worst Alpine avalanche.

The ski hikers were on the Armancette glacier at 11.30am when snow on the whole mountainside appeared to detach itself and come crashing down towards forests 1,600m below, video from the resort showed. One of the survivors suffered moderate injuries and was flown to hospital.

There was no avalanche alert in force but warm sunshine and a brisk wind appeared to have been a factor, officials said.

The glacier "is quite popular with experienced hikers at this time of year", François Barbier, the mayor of Les Contamines-Montjoie, said. "They climb on foot to the summit at 3,600m and come down on cross-country skis. The refuges that give access to the glacier were full and the conditions were good yesterday."

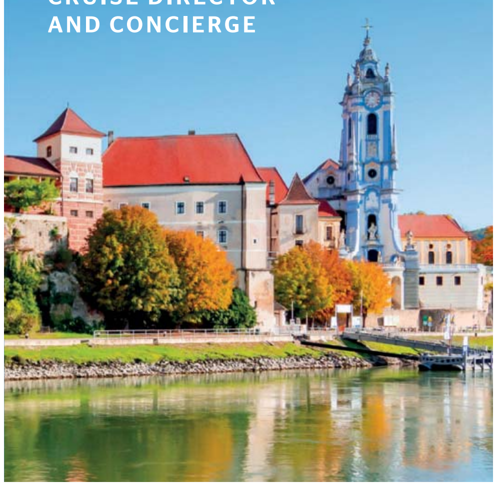
On average, 30 people a year die in avalanches in the French Alps.

On the Swiss side nine ski hikers were swept away but escaped unharmed or with minor injuries after being caught by a big avalanche on Saturday. It was triggered near the summit of the Alphubel mountain in the Saas-Fee area close to the Italian border and near the Matterhorn.

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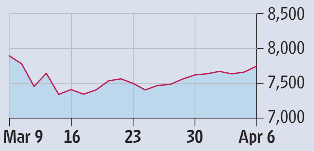
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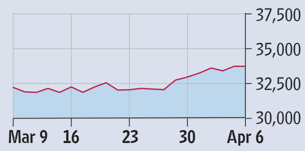
Business

WORLD MARKETS (Friday's close. Change on the week)

FTSE 100 (Closed)
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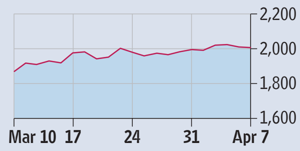


Dow Jones (Closed)
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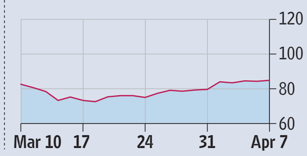


COMMODITIES

Gold
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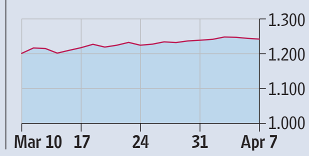


Brent crude (6pm)
$84.94 (+5.23) ▲

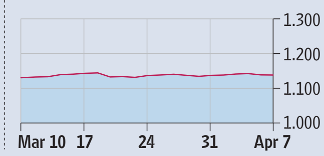


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SFO intervention delays decision on trader's Libor rigging appeal

Ben Martin Banking Editor

A decision on whether Tom Hayes will be permitted to appeal against his conviction for Libor rigging has been delayed after the Serious Fraud Office stepped in to defend its case against the former trader.

The criminal cases review commission had been due to hold a meeting last month to consider Hayes's case but it was postponed after the SFO decided to make representations to the body. The commissioners will meet to discuss his situation on May 22.

It prolongs what has already been a years-long attempt by Hayes to have his conviction overturned. Should he succeed, it would be a blow to the SFO, which had prosecuted him, and a turning point in the Libor manipulation scandal, which shook the global financial industry when it erupted in 2012.

Hayes, who previously worked at UBS and Citigroup, became the face of the scandal when in 2015 he became the first person to be convicted by a jury of rigging the financial benchmark Libor for profit. He was originally sentenced to 14 years, although this was subsequently reduced to 11 on appeal, and he was released in January 2021, having served about half of his term.

The commission is an independent body that examines possible miscarriages of justice and can refer cases back to the Court of Appeal. Hayes submitted his case to the body in 2017 but it has yet to make a final decision.

It made a provisional decision in December 2021 not to refer the former trader's case. Since then, however, a series of US court rulings resulted in every American trial conviction for rigging Libor being overturned. Longstanding US criminal charges against Hayes were also thrown out in October.

The American developments form part of Hayes's effort to have his conviction in Britain quashed.

A spokesman for the commission said: "This has been a large and complex review, and no final decision has yet been taken."

The SFO said it had investigated nine individuals for rate-rigging; all either pleaded guilty or were found guilty by a jury. "A number of those convictions have been reviewed by the Court of Appeal and have been upheld," it said.

Listings slide spells danger for London

Capital's status at risk amid calls for shake-up

Jessica Newman

Initial public offerings on the London Stock Exchange fell to their lowest in a decade in the past financial year, underlining concerns about the capital's status as an international financial centre.

The amount of money raised in new listings has fallen substantially in the year to March 31, with volatile markets whipped up by the war in Ukraine and jitters over the global economy, while the number of companies delisting, which has jumped to a six-year high, underpins calls for a shake-up of the stock market listing regime.

Only 41 companies completed initial public offerings on the main market of the London Stock Exchange last year, the worst showing since a mere 37 came to market in the same period to March 2013. The £1.2 billion raised in new issues was the smallest amount generated in at least 14 years and is 80 per cent below the £6 billion raised a year earlier. The figures from UHY Hacker Young, the accountancy group, showed that 82 firms delisted over the period.

In recent blows to London, the FTSE 100 building materials supplier CRH said it was shifting its primary listing to New York, while Flutter, the gambling business behind Betfair and Paddy Power, is exploring a similar move. The chip designer Arm, one of the country's leading tech companies, has also said that it will float in the United States.

The plunge in London's listings against the backdrop of unfavourable conditions means "for many in the corporate finance community this has been the worst year in their careers," said Colin Wright, partner and chairman of the UHY Hacker Young Group.

British politicians and financiers have been looking at an overhaul of the listing rules over the past couple of years to boost London's attraction for international companies and investors.

London's stock markets, especially the FTSE 100, which is heavily weighted towards traditional stocks such as banks, drugmakers and oil explorers, have often been criticised for lacking tech stocks. Nick Train, one of Britain's best-known fund managers, branded the UK the backwater of global equity markets, pointing to the dearth of "significant technology champions" and the UK's "dismal capital performance".

The Financial Conduct Authority (FCA) has been accelerating its revamp of the listing rules, saying it would start a consultation on its proposal to replace the premium and standard segments of the London market with a single category. As part of the switch, companies would no longer have to demonstrate a three-year record of financial performance before listing, nor would they have to hold shareholder votes on big deals and related-party transactions.

This follows three government-backed reviews in recent years that have suggested that the listing rules could be changed to improve competitiveness. The FCA has taken forward some of these recommendations by loosening the free-float requirements and relaxing restrictions around companies with dual-class share structures in late 2021.

Scott McCubbin, EY's UK and Ireland IPO leader, believes there is no reason why the UK could not fill the gap it has in technology. He said: "Do I think London is behind other capital markets in the world? Absolutely not."

ZUMA PRESS/ALAMY



Cerveza with a smile Heineken's Cruzcampo, the No1 draught beer in Spain, is launching in Britain with a multimillion-pound marketing campaign. With more than 100 years of heritage behind the brand, it is said to be an affordable premium beer

BT scheme to manage other pensions

Patrick Hosking Financial Editor

The giant BT Pension Scheme is throwing down a challenge to the big US-owned pension consultants by launching a division to offer its in-house expertise to other schemes, and has secured the EE retirement plan as its first client.

The BT scheme, which manages £47 billion on behalf of 270,000 present and former staff, will announce today that its wholly owned management company BTPSM will be renamed Brightwell and pitching itself to other traditional pension funds.

The aim is to offer fiduciary management to other schemes, which will put it head to head with large consulting groups including Aon, Mercer and Willis Towers Watson. Fiduciary management is the fast-growing and lucrative business of setting investment strategy, managing portfolios and selecting and overseeing outside fund managers. Brightwell will also offer administration services to other schemes.

In the EE deal, Brightwell will be appointed fiduciary manager to the EE defined benefit scheme, which has £1 billion of assets and about 8,000 members. EE was created out of the old Orange mobile phone business and bought by BT in 2016 for £12.5 billion.

Aon, which handled EE's fiduciary work, is understood to have been sacked as of April 1.

Morten Nilsson, chief executive of Brightwell, said: "We're looking to work with a select number of schemes. We're not looking for volume."

He emphasised that there would be no pooling of assets between BTPS and other schemes, but Brightwell would use its buying power to negotiate lower-cost fund management contracts for both BTPS and third-party schemes. It uses about 25 outside asset management firms.

"There's been so much value leakage in this industry," Nilsson said, referring to the army of consultants, actuaries, administrators and fund managers that feed off pension funds and whose interests, he said, were not exactly aligned with schemes. "Pension schemes should collaborate more, but whenever we talk about it, there's always an intermediary that's offering to facilitate that collaboration, and that means we never get the real value out of it."

BT and the BTPS trustees approved the diversification plan, which Nilsson said would cost "only a small amount". BTPSM had already done third-party work after buying Procentia, the pension scheme software provider, in 2019.

The Competition and Markets

Continued on page 34

Need to know

1 Heavy batteries in electric vehicles could put multistorey car parks at risk of collapse, a structural engineer has warned. Chris Whapples, a car park consultant, said there was "definitely potential" for older car parks "in poor condition to collapse". **Page 20**

2 Initial public offerings on the London Stock Exchange fell to their lowest level in a decade last year, underlining concerns about the capital's status as an international financial centre. **Page 33**

3 The giant BT Pension Scheme is throwing down a challenge to the big US-owned pension consultants by launching a division to offer its in-house expertise to other schemes, and has secured the EE retirement plan as its first client. **Page 33**

4 A decision on whether Tom Hayes will be permitted to appeal against his conviction for Libor rigging has been delayed after the Serious Fraud Office stepped in to defend its case against the former trader. **Page 33**

5 The interim chief executive of Reckitt, Nicandro Durante, has been paid almost £200,000 in benefits, mostly relocation costs, after the former big tobacco boss was promoted to run the consumer health and hygiene company last year.

6 The amount of vacant office space across the UK has jumped 65 per cent over the past three years, disproving suggestions from some landlords that the pandemic has not affected demand. The trend has been towards moving into smaller but better-quality offices, according to CoStar data.

7 Supply chain constraints, higher raw material prices and a jump in the cost of capital will leave Britain with a larger bill for the next round of offshore wind projects, the government's industry expert has warned. Tim Pick has told ministers not to expect a further price drop at the next auction.

8 One of the UK's largest private building companies paid out a £17.5 million dividend to its family-owned investors last year as record orders defied a slowdown in the property market. Wates Group reported a 3 per cent increase in annual pre-tax profits to £33.7 million. **Page 36**

9 Tesla is upping investment in China at a time of mounting tension between Washington and Beijing with a deal to build a new battery factory in Shanghai. The electric carmaker, run by Elon Musk, said that it would make its Megapack large-scale energy storage unit at the plant. The company already has a factory for electric vehicles in Shanghai. **Page 36**

10 The International Monetary Fund is hosting its first in-person spring meetings in Washington since the pandemic this week. But rather than relief at the return of normalcy, an air of foreboding is hanging over the finance ministers and central bankers. **Pages 38-39**

Daring project to give UK

In the second of a series on the chancellor's five high-growth sectors, The Times examines advanced engineering

THE TIMES
THE UK'S HOT GROWTH PROSPECTS

Robert Lea Industrial Editor

If advanced manufacturing is one of the pillars on which the future British economy is to be based, then Project Tempest will be the national showcase of whether the UK can deliver on the technology and its capabilities.

Tempest is the next-generation stealth fighter commissioned by the Ministry of Defence and being led by BAE Systems. Its remit is to make science fiction become reality, producing aircraft, probably unmanned, commanding a swarming squadron of autonomous drones.

Lightweighting, composites, additive manufacturing, digital engineering, decarbonisation, marshalling the internet of things — all the buzzwords of advanced manufacturing will come together using technologies in development by a generation of engineers who may not yet know the skills they need. The project will sustain 20,000 jobs, although those roles will be far different from those that produced the Typhoon fighter jet.

According to Ian Muldowney, chief operating officer of BAE's aerospace business, it is all about the development of sovereign technical skills to make the UK competitive in export markets. He argues that "projects like Tempest will play a major role in a technology-driven economy and maintaining a world-leading advanced manufacturing sector here in the UK".

This a country where manufacturing has dwindled to account for only 10 per cent of the economy, but data from the High Value Manufacturing Catapult suggests it is a sector where ambitions remain high. The catapult comprises a group of technology centres around the country financed by the taxpayer, research funding and private capital. Its aim is to connect universities and private enterprise to get ideas or innovations from the laboratory or computer screen and accelerate them through development into industrial commercialisation. In the past year alone, the catapult has worked with 5,500 companies, more than half of them small or medium-sized, on 2,200 commercial projects, 460 collaborative research and development programmes and 278 initiatives working in partnership with universities.

"Our mandate is to help to develop UK companies," Katherine Bennett, the former Airbus executive who heads the catapult, said. "We need to be seen to be the place to do business, to attract more investment in the UK and to encourage our existing businesses to do more.

"Investors see what is happening in the United States [with President Biden's Inflation Reduction Act legislation offering $370 billion of subsidies] and they see the UK economy has been buffeted, but they also see the UK as a place of innovation excellence."

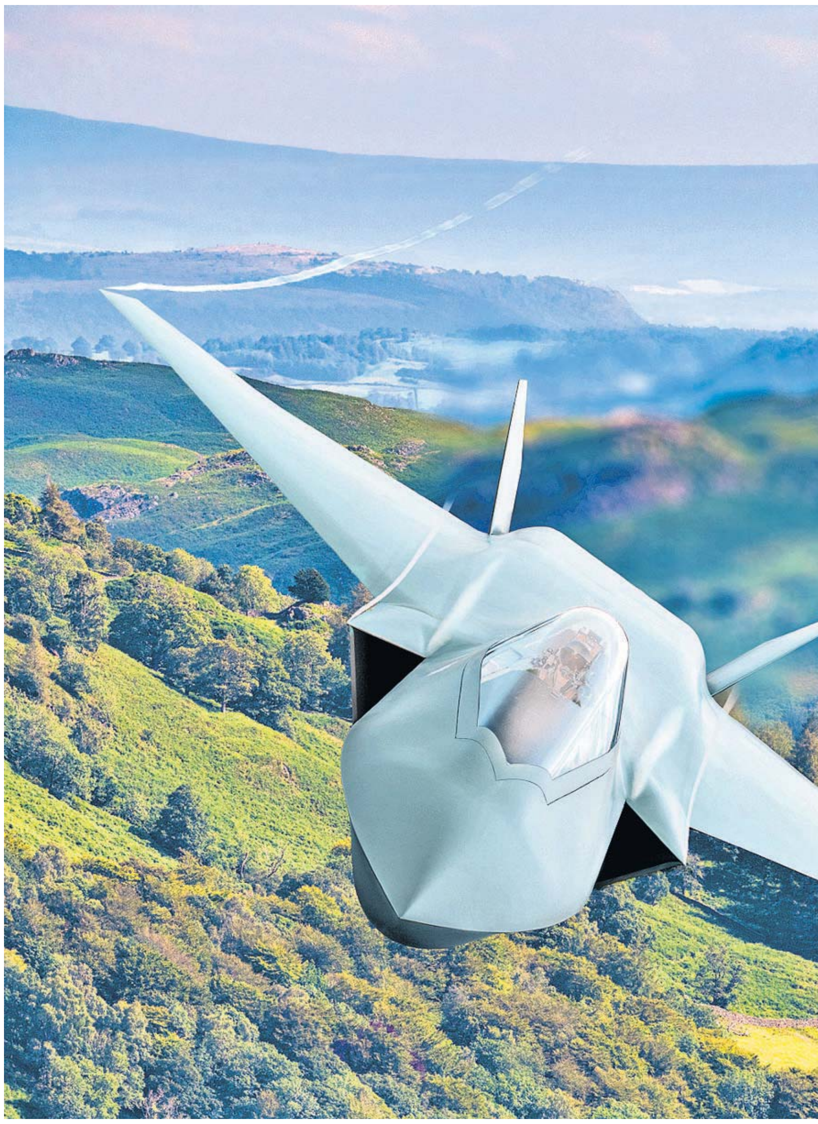
Nevertheless, Bennett fears the danger of losing the "muscle memory" of the UK's pre-Brexit access to Horizon Europe, the European Union-wide innovation programme, as well as the government's chequered relationship with industry. "We need a government that listens to industry and need industry to collaborate with government," she said. "We need government to trust business more."

The barriers to Britain's advanced manufacturing sector are well known to ministers. The business department's own *UK Innovation Survey* last year found growing anxiety in the sector around the cost and availability of finance; excessive perceived economic risk in the UK; a lack of qualified personnel; and the withdrawal from the EU, which has not been balanced by a diminution in regulation.

Thomas Aubrey, of Cambridge University's Bennett Institute for Public Policy, stated in a report: "Advanced manufacturing has been negatively affected by failings in the UK's regulatory and trade policy as a result of Brexit, [acting] as a major disincentive for firms to set up shop in the UK.

"The government must address the issue of regulatory alignment if it wants to see advanced manufacturing succeed. The longer it takes the government to recognise this, the harder it will be to turn these increasingly uncompetitive industries around and drive productivity upwards."

Make UK, the trade body for the advanced manufacturing sector, has long been a proponent of a coherent and consistent industrial strategy. Its wishlist is long. On the workforce, it says the government needs to tackle labour shortages by putting engineers on the "occupations list" to allow the



The Tempest next-generation stealth fighter will be built at BAE's Factory of the

'The greatest subsidy we can have is consistent public policy'

Javid, Clark, Sharma, Leadsom, Kwarteng, Rees-Mogg and now Shapps: this list, with no little eye-rolling, was made by a senior industrialist (aided by a googling assistant) when asked what were manufacturing's needs from government (Robert Lea writes).

"Certainty, continuity, coherence and consistency," was the second response. Not "subsidy": many manufacturing leaders don't want to put their hand out, but they also see an international playing field skewed by the subsidies available in the United States and the European Union.

Some take a more dogmatic, free-market approach, that subsidies promote inertia and unhealthy state-dependence; others say they prompt investment decisions and attract private capital. But, as one lobbyist explained: "The greatest subsidy we can receive is the certainty of consistent public policy."

Reckitt chief cleans up on £200k benefits

Alex Ralph

The interim chief executive of Reckitt has been paid almost £200,000 in benefits, mostly relocation costs, after the former big tobacco boss was promoted to run the consumer health and hygiene company last year.

Nicandro Durante, 66, who once ran British American Tobacco, was promoted in September after Laxman Narasimhan abruptly left the maker of Mucinex, Nurofen and Strepsils to become chief executive of Starbucks.

Anti-smoking campaigners have questioned Durante's appointment to the top job at Reckitt, a company whose stated aim is a "cleaner, healthier world through purpose-led brands".

Durante's benefits amounted to £199,346 last year, Reckitt's annual report shows, which it says "primarily consist of one-off relocation costs including temporary accommodation, home leave benefits such as flights, the use of a car and healthcare".

Durante, who has been on Reckitt's board since 2013 and has been a senior independent director since 2019, has relocated from Brazil to the UK. His total pay was £2.1 million, including a bonus of almost £1.6 million. He also received a long-term incentive performance grant of 75,000 shares and 150,000 options for the three years to 2024, which, as bonus payments, will be "pro-rata-ed for time employed" in the role. Reckitt, based in Slough, is one of the world's largest consumer companies and was formed in 1999 through the merger of Reckitt & Colman and Benckiser of the Netherlands. The FTSE 100 company is valued at about £44 billion.

Reckitt issued no formal update on recruitment plans for a permanent chief executive at its full-year results, but Durante said it was expected to announce its plans during the first half of this year.

Reckitt's report also details the terms of Narasimhan's exit. It shows all his unvested incentive awards lapsed in full. "There was no payment in lieu of notice or other payments associated with Laxman's departure."



Nicandro Durante relocated to the UK from Brazil

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 33

BT to manage other pensions

Authority investigated the fiduciary management sector in 2018 and found that competition was not working properly, ordering schemes to carry out competitive tendering. Other institutions including Goldman Sachs, BlackRock and Schroders have entered the fiduciary business in recent years.

The BTPS has benefited from rising gilt yields in the past two years, its deficit shrinking from £8 billion to £4.3 billion by June 2022. It is a heavy user of liability-driven investment, or LDI, and was relatively unscathed from the mini-budget crisis last September. "It was a pretty hairy experience for all pension schemes," Nilsson said.

He described the tougher rules on LDI announced last week by the Bank of England's financial policy committee as "pretty sensible" and added: "We are holding higher buffers right now than what they are proposing."

manufacturing its wings

ANDREW MCCAREN FOR THE TIMES



Future in Lancashire, top right, which uses advanced technology and materials

recruitment of foreign talent, investing in digital skills and training, making the apprenticeship schemes fit for purpose and building a more highly skilled workforce, which also would require the re-education of company managements and industrial leaders.

The drive toward competitiveness must include solutions to the high cost of energy, according to Make UK. If companies are to invest in decarbonisation, they must have the right fiscal incentives for reliefs and exemptions on green or digitalised machinery and plant equipment and R&D capital spend.

"There are low-cost and no-cost steps that government can take to help manufacturers to thrive and not just survive," Stephen Phipson, Make UK's chief executive, said.

"If government wants to be bold and ensure that the UK is the top manufacturing nation in the world, then government should take this moment to set out how it will back UK manufacturing now and in the future and lay out plans for an ambitious industrial strategy that puts manufacturing at the heart of it."

TOMORROW

UK firms leading the way in digital technology

Modern advanced products hold the key for discoverIE

Behind the story

DiscoverIE is one of several companies on the stock market that, though not in the public eye, have attracted a loyal shareholder base enticed by, in its case, a specialist British engineering firm designing, creating and making advanced componentry (Robert Lea writes).

"We focus on niches where we can add value, producing components that are built into a product and attract premium pricing," Nick Jefferies, its chief executive said.

The FTSE 250 business valued on the stock market at £750 million comprises a collection of decentralised, international, advanced manufacturing businesses that together aim to grow at 10 per cent a year, with profit margins in double figures, too.

Jefferies said there were two global drivers offering a huge prize for British advanced manufacturing that could offset the "backward step, burnt bridges and operational difficulties" brought by Brexit. Political sensitivities about doing business with China and growing demand for decarbonisation were, he said, leading to the "greenshoring" of supply chains closer to home and affecting the investment and operational decisions of every company.

"We operate in the UK because the UK has the capabilities, just as they are there in Germany or the United States," Jefferies said, "but we could do a lot more here. Specialist manufacturing needs a specialist workforce and ours are well-paid because we command that price premium for high-quality, highly engineered products.

"This is what the UK is good at. We have a highly trained, high-skilled workforce from the education base that we have here. We have the engineers who know how to build things, something the UK has a heritage and a history of doing. We have the expertise."

The UK businesses of discoverIE — whose capitalised IE stands for "innovative electronics" — include Sens-Tech, based in Egham, Surrey, producing photodetector imaging systems in security scanners, identifying, for example, items that can but should not be going through airport baggage screening. Its customers include Leidos, the American defence technology company, although Sens-Tech's kit is used also in food processing and medical applications.

Variohm, based on Towcester, Northamptonshire, makes a wide range of custom-built sensors for use in measuring the precision or integrity of train and lorry braking systems or of infrastructure such as road bridges.

The group's Cursor Controls business was born out of the wartime radar technology of Marconi, but has been repurposed in the 21st century to produce the technology in the "human machine interface" control panels used in hospitals or dental surgeries. Business is so brisk that the group has built a new facility at its headquarters in Newark in Nottinghamshire.

"What we produce is only a small proportion of our customers' products," Jefferies, said, "but crucially for us, they are essential components."



Nick Jefferies: 'We focus on niches'

Pandemic has left swathes of empty office space

Tom Howard

The amount of vacant office space across the UK has jumped 65 per cent over the past three years, disproving suggestions from some landlords that the pandemic has not affected demand.

There is 102 million sq ft of empty offices, according to data from CoStar, the real estate analytics group — the most since 2014.

About a third of that space is in London, although about five million sq ft of offices sit empty in each of Manchester, Birmingham and Glasgow, which has the highest office vacancy rate in the UK at 10.6 per cent.

With many people able and willing to work from home for at least some of the week, companies have started to rethink their property requirements.

Close to 16 million sq ft of offices was leased in London last year, according to the CoStar data, compared with an average of closer to 24 million sq ft in the years before the pandemic. Regional office leasing was roughly 17 million sq ft over the past 12 months.

The trend has been towards moving into smaller but better-quality offices, Grant Lonsdale, a director of analytics at CoStar, said. Office leasing agents had repeatedly described this as the "flight to quality", as occupiers demand modern, more eco-friendly bases to help them attract and retain staff in a competitive jobs market, but also to help them meet their net-zero goals.

About two thirds of the vacant office space in the UK is in buildings built before 2000, while a further 24 million sq ft is in buildings delivered between 2000 and 2009.

For newer offices built after 2010, net absorption rates, which track tenants moving out as well as those moving in, remain positive.

However, net absorption rates, which CoStar calls the "true measure of demand", of older offices have been "strongly negative" since the pandemic began, with far more tenants leaving than moving in.

Vacancy rates in more modern buildings with better energy efficiency ratings are falling and rents are climbing, and the gaps are only widening.

Companies are prepared to pay big money for the right building in the right place. In London, a small investment firm paid a record £277.50 per sq ft for its new 3,000 sq ft office in Berkeley Square, Mayfair, late in 2020.

That lease, Mark Stansfield, senior director at CoStar, said, was something of an outlier given that it was a relatively small office, but rents for best in class offices are generally rising.

In most regional cities, occupiers of those "prime" offices are paying north of £40 per sq ft, the data shows. Before the pandemic, rents were closer to £30 or £35 per sq ft, Lonsdale said.

In central London, buildings with the top energy efficiency ratings are fetching, on average, £73 per sq ft — £10 more than those with slightly lower ratings.

However, Stansfield said that "beyond the prime offices, it is very much a tenants' market".

Despite falling demand, office construction activity is close to record levels, which will probably lead to a further rise in vacancy.

Stansfield said: "It feels quite counterintuitive given that demand, broadly, has fallen, but developers are confident that this flight to quality [will persist]."

Surging costs to hit offshore wind projects, expert warns

Alistair Osborne

Supply chain constraints, higher raw material prices and a jump in the cost of capital will leave Britain with a larger bill for the next round of offshore wind projects, the government's industry expert has warned.

Tim Pick, Britain's first offshore wind champion, has told ministers not to expect a further price drop at the next auction below the £37.35 per megawatt-hour at which some operators last year agreed to sell their power.

Under the government's contracts for difference (CfD) regime, via which developers are paid an index-linked flat rate for the electricity they produce over 15 years, the price for offshore wind has continued to fall. It was down 5.8 per cent last year on the lowest bid in 2019.

However, with the fifth auction round looming, Pick used his first report on the industry to say that the government "should recognise that as a result of supply chain constraints as well as increasing costs of capital, CfD strike prices for fixed bottom offshore wind are unlikely to continue their downward trajectory".

Companies have pointed to the rising costs of steel, for making the turbines, and the increasing difficulties in sourcing parts as countries crank up their investment in green energy — partly in response to Russia's invasion of Ukraine. America's Inflation Reduction Act, dangling $369 billion of incentives for spending on renewables, has also skewed the market unfavourably against Britain where investors are also grappling with a windfall tax.

There is a tacit acknowledgment from the government that prices are increasing with the cap for the next offshore wind auction set at £44.

In his report, published last week, Pick said offshore wind had been a "major UK success story", with 13.8 gigawatts of fixed capacity already installed, including the "world's first, second, third and fourth largest" farms. Britain has the largest fleet outside China. The UK also has a further 6.4 GW under construction and 12.6 GW with planning consent.

He warned, however, that government plans to have 50 GW by 2030 were under threat unless Britain sped up planning and dramatically improved connections to the electricity grid. "If I had to sum up in one sentence where we stand today," he said, "I couldn't use words better than those of a European developer with investments across the UK: 'The UK is long on seabed leases, but short on timely grid connections'."

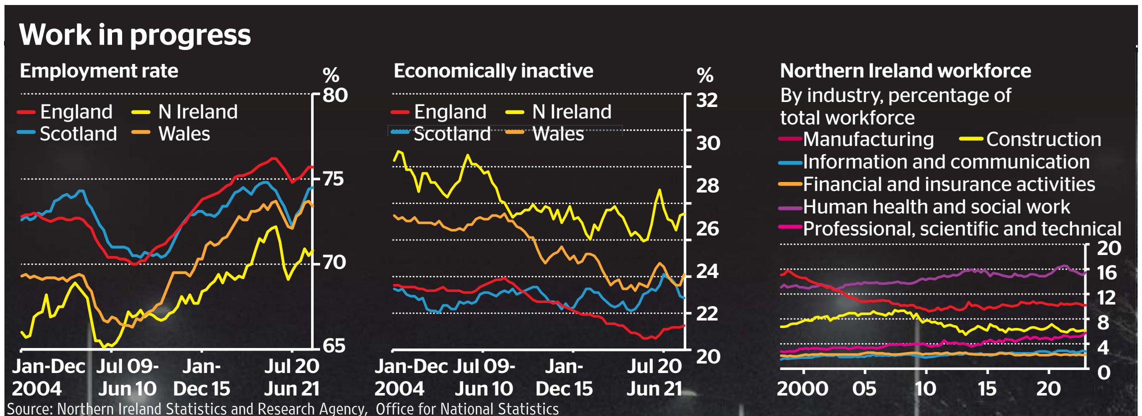
He said there was an "urgent need" to "upgrade our national grid" and that the government "should recognise that grid constraints are becoming a significant brake on wider economic activity, not just on offshore wind farms".

He said that, since the grid's privatisation in the early 1990s, Britain had built an average of "only around 50km of new transmission lines" a year but "we are reaching the technical limits of that approach". He noted that at times offshore wind farms were paid to stop generating because the grid cannot handle "the electricity being produced".

Pick also criticised lengthening planning delays, noting "government and industry have long recognised" their ambitions for offshore wind "can only be realised by reversing the upwards trajectory of development times".

Province profits from peace dividend

The Good Friday agreement has acted as a catalyst for businesses in Northern Ireland, **Emma Taggart** writes



Source: Northern Ireland Statistics and Research Agency, Office for National Statistics



After taking out a £5,000 loan in 1996 from Newry Credit Union, the late Brian Conlon founded First Derivatives from his mother's spare bedroom. Today the business is worth an estimated £472 million according to Factset and operates in 14 locations.

From its foundations in the border city on the main road from Dublin to Belfast, the company expanded globally, floating on AIM and acquiring companies in North America before becoming FD Technologies, specialising in providing software and services to financial institutions.

It is just one of many businesses in Northern Ireland that have expanded in the 25 years since the Good Friday agreement was signed. The agreement brought to an end the three-decade period of violence in Northern Ireland, known as the Troubles. A more stable environment has allowed businesses across the region to harness a "peace dividend" and pursue global expansion by attracting international customers and investors.

Seamus Keating, chief executive of FD Technologies, attributed the group's growth to the drive Conlon had to build an international business that offered opportunities for people in the region. "Some of that drive came from growing up in a relatively small place that was relatively disadvantaged at the time and a real belief that he could build something and create something that gave opportunity and potential to young people," he said.

The company is a big recruiter from Northern Ireland's universities, hiring between 300 and 400 graduates each year. Despite the group's global expansion, its offices in Belfast and Newry remain a key training ground for staff, with half of its 3,000 employees based in Northern Ireland and the Republic.

Keating highlighted the role of the peace process in aiding global growth for businesses. "I think the stability that's come over the last 25 odd years in Northern Ireland, it's a really important factor in some of those organisations being very comfortable with those mission-critical operations and support services being delivered out of Northern Ireland," he said.

That stability was threatened by Brexit, particularly over the risks of a no-deal departure from the European Union. "Brexit was such an existential issue for the sector and for the Northern Ireland economy," Stephen Kelly, chief of Manufacturing NI, said. He added that the impact of a no-deal Brexit would have been "catastrophic" for the economy and the avoidance of this scenario "was recognition of the unique challenges that Brexit has on the island of Ireland".

Arriving in Lisburn's Coca-Cola factory shortly after agreeing the Windsor framework, Rishi Sunak declared Northern Ireland "the world's most exciting economic zone". The arrangements, which were lauded by many businesses, will bring a reduction in the number of checks that take place on goods travelling between Britain and Northern Ireland. Kelly certainly agrees, adding that the framework has allowed the region to maintain "its unique access to EU markets and unfettered access to the rest of the UK market".

It is not just manufacturing businesses in Northern Ireland that are keen to maintain a global outlook. Kainos, a Belfast-based software company, has also grown extensively from a collaboration between Fujitsu and Queen's University Belfast in 1986.



Fears of instability on the island of Ireland over Brexit have faded

Brendan Mooney, chief executive, highlighted how the burgeoning tech industry had allowed the business to expand as companies required software systems and digital services. The international customer base has been a driving force for the company, with about half of its 730 clients based in the US.

Recruiting several hundred graduates each year, the hiring of home-grown talent was a cornerstone of the firm, Mooney said. "For us, the ambition is to build a global business here in Northern Ireland," he added.

Industries such as technology and pharmaceuticals have been among the biggest beneficiaries with jobs in the information and communication sector growing 99 per cent since 1998, the second highest of any UK region. The employment rate has increased in the years since the peace agreement, growing from 66 per cent at the beginning of 2004 to 70.5 per cent by September last year. Yet the region still lags Britain and Ireland.

Mooney detailed the importance of the region's stability to investment. "People who are coming to Northern Ireland who are investing and thinking about doing business in Northern Ireland's companies, they want to be able to travel to Northern Ireland … and they're not going to travel whenever things are unsettled," he said.

Mooney said the rapid changes in the sector, such as developments in AI, provided significant opportunities for the company and its employees.

The emergence of the tech sector in the region has been a relatively new development but the longstanding manufacturing industry, known in its heyday for shipbuilding, remains a feature of Northern Ireland's economy, employing nearly 90,000 people.

Manufacturing has been boosted by US investment. Materials manufacturer Terex arrived in Dungannon, Co Tyrone, in 1999 after it acquired Powerscreen International. The group has continued to invest in Northern Ireland since then, with 2,200 staff in nine sites. Kieran Hegarty, chief executive, said the history of manufacturing mobile processing machinery in Northern Ireland, which began in the 1960s, enabled the parent company to establish a significant presence in the region.

The company's connections with local universities and technical colleges has enabled it to train and recruit staff. It also invests in apprenticeships. "Our presence in Northern Ireland has to encompass the design of the products, the manufacturing of the products, it has to encompass the whole business," Hegarty said.

Selling internationally is a central feature for the vast majority of manufacturing businesses in Northern Ireland, with 90 per cent of them selling goods in the Republic of Ireland or other EU countries and 51 per cent selling to the rest of the UK. Northern Ireland's location also greatly benefits an American parent company, as shipping times crossing the Atlantic can sometimes be quicker than sending machinery across the US by road, Hegarty said.

The global outlook for manufacturing in Northern Ireland gives Kelly a lot of hope and optimism for the industry's future. "We know that there's a lot of interest in international buyers acquiring businesses here in Northern Ireland," he said. "I know going around our manufacturing community, they're all making plans for expansion."

Wates defies the property slowdown

Mehreen Khan

One of the UK's largest private building companies paid out a £17.5 million dividend to its family-owned investors last year as record orders defied a slowdown in the property market.

Wates Group reported a 3 per cent increase in annual pre-tax profits to £33.7 million last year, and an order book of £8.35 billion, up 17 per cent. Sales were 16.5 per cent ahead at £1.89 billion. The strong financial performance has allowed the company, still owned by the founding Wates family, to pay out the £17.5 million dividend, up from £3.4 million in 2021.

Eoghan O'Lionaird, chief executive, said the company had successfully weathered "unprecedented global shocks" in 2022, including a surge in energy prices and rising interest rates which have dampened the UK's red-hot property market.

The builder has a series of contracts to build and maintain social housing and won lucrative government deals to build hospitals and at least six net-zero carbon schools for the Department for Education. About half the group's construction revenues derive from central and local government work.

Wates last year won its largest ever contract to build a £500 million gigafactory in Sunderland for Japan's Envision AESC, that will produce electric vehicle batteries for carmakers such as Nissan.

Wates marked its 125th anniversary last year and is a rare family-owned business that has survived more than three generations. It was founded in 1897 as a householder by Edward Wates and has more than 4,000 employees.

O'Lionaird became chief executive in February, joining from the marine engineering company James Fisher and Sons. He replaced David Allen, who left the company last summer.

The group's construction business reported a record order book of £4.5 billion, while its residential arm, which concentrates largely on London and the southeast, had an order book of £2 billion, up from £1.8 billion in 2021.

The company said that it expected higher interest rates to slow the residential property sector this year. "Taken together with the wider uncertainty around the UK economy, this will likely affect pricing on newbuild housing," it added.

It said demand had risen for social housing retrofit work and building upgrades, with building safety high on the agenda since the Grenfell Tower fire.

Musk doubles down on Tesla investment in China

Alistair Osborne

Tesla is increasing investment in China at a time of mounting tension between Washington and Beijing with a deal to build a battery factory in Shanghai.

The electric carmaker, run by Elon Musk, said it would make its Megapack large-scale energy storage unit at the plant. It already has a factory for electric vehicles in Shanghai.

Construction is scheduled to begin in the third quarter of this year, with the plant expected to start production in the second quarter of 2024. It is aiming to produce 10,000 Megapacks a year, equal to around 40 gigawatt hours of energy storage. The company said each unit could store enough energy to power an average of 3,600 homes for one hour.

The agreement for the new factory was signed at a ceremony in Shanghai, attended by Tom Zhu, Tesla's senior vice-president of automotive, and Shanghai government officials.

Musk's move comes amid heightened tension between the United States and China over Beijing's relations with President Putin of Russia and claims that the spy balloon that was shot down over America was Chinese.

President Biden is said to be close to trialling a screening mechanism for investment in China, aimed at boosting US domestic manufacturing and cutting the country's reliance on Chinese factories and technology.

Paul Johnson

VAT may be 50, but it has a lot of growing up to do — and so do we



A big anniversary passed just over a week ago, barely marked, and certainly not celebrated. For it was 50 years ago, on April 1, 1973, that value added tax, VAT, was introduced in the UK, replacing the old purchase tax. So, let's celebrate it now. Happy 50th birthday, VAT.

It has certainly grown up big. It's the third biggest of all our taxes behind income tax and national insurance contributions. It brings in £160 billion a year — about one pound in every six that we pay in tax. It has lots of cousins around the world. "Unquestionably the most successful fiscal innovation of the last half century … perhaps the most economically efficient way in which countries can raise significant tax revenues", according to one writer.

But what is VAT? It taxes all sales, whether wholesale or retail, but allows registered traders to deduct the tax charged on their inputs. It is therefore, as its name suggests, a tax on the value added at each stage of the production process. Hence VAT is in effect imposed on the value of the final product but is collected in small chunks from each link in the supply chain. So even if one firm in the chain tries to evade it, most of it should still get paid. By contrast a simpler-sounding tax like a purchase tax which just adds on tax at the point at which a good is sold to the final consumer is much more open to abuse. That's why VAT is so popular among revenue authorities around the world — outside of the US it is pretty much ubiquitous.

VAT has also ridden to the rescue of numerous British chancellors looking to raise more money. Geoffrey Howe very nearly doubled it to 15 per cent in 1979. Norman Lamont raised it to 17.5 per cent in 1991 to deal with the poll tax fiasco, and George Osborne took it to 20 per cent in his first budget in 2010 to help pay down the post-financial crisis deficit. Oddly enough, these big increases seem to have proved easier than attempts to make much smaller changes by charging VAT on more of our purchases. Trying to extend it to pasties — or more precisely food bought warm but designed to cool down — caused a huge outcry and the dubbing of Osborne's 2012 budget as an "omnishambles". Lamont's effort to extend VAT to domestic energy in 1993 helped lose him the chancellorship, and the Conservatives the 1997 election.

For although the main rate of VAT is 20 per cent, much of what we buy has VAT charged at zero. Most food, children's clothes and public transport are "zero rated". It is charged at only 5 per cent on domestic energy. It struggles to deal with financial services which are exempt from VAT.

Deciding what is and is not subject to VAT creates all sorts of fun. Let's at least celebrate VAT for the laughs that it provides. If you want a pet, get a rabbit. No VAT on rabbits because they are edible. Honeybees are not subject to VAT, bumblebees are. I'm not sure who buys bumblebees but I guess the tax code needs to cater for every eventuality. As for gingerbread men, they are zero rated for VAT so long as the only chocolate they contain are chocolate eyes. Any more chocolate decoration and the price goes up by 20 per cent because they become VATable.



An attempt to extend VAT to pasties in 2012 prompted a huge outcry

As you can imagine, lawyers love it. Long, expensive court cases have been fought over Jaffa cakes, flapjacks and cereal bars. That's because it matters for VAT what counts as a cake (not generally VATable), and what counts as a biscuit (subject to VAT if covered in chocolate). No VAT on flapjacks but there is on cereal bars. I could go on but you probably get the point. As the tax lawyer Dan Neidle has put it, "any sufficiently detailed VAT rule is indistinguishable from satire".

This tower of complexity, as with much else in the tax system, has its origins way back in history. Some of the distinctions were introduced in 1940 with the original purchase tax, specifically designed to be raised on luxury goods (chocolate biscuits but not cakes apparently) and with the stated aim of reducing waste of raw materials during the war. We still live with the results, and still justify them by claiming that VAT shouldn't be levied on "necessities". Though personally I find chocolate biscuits at least as necessary as chocolate cakes.

In truth the widespread zero rating that continues to exist makes little sense. It's a bigger giveaway to the rich than the poor, since although it is true that the poor spend a higher fraction of their budgets on goods not subject to VAT, the rich spend more in total. If we were to extend VAT we could raise up to an additional £50 billion a year, more than enough to compensate those on lower incomes by cutting other taxes and raising benefits, while also making the whole system much more straightforward. If we look to our European neighbours, none have as narrow a VAT base as we do; most raise more from it than we do. It's true that VAT is not progressive in the way that income tax is, but then it doesn't need to be. Income tax does the job of introducing serious progressivity into the tax system. Not every tax needs to do that.

So, VAT may be big. It may be 50 years old. But it still has an awful lot of growing up to do. Then again, so do we. If we have a tantrum every time a chancellor tries to tax a pasty, VAT will never fulfil its potential. And we'll never escape the crazy distinctions between almost identical goods, and the lawyers' paradise, we have created.

Paul Johnson is director of the Institute for Fiscal Studies. Follow him on @PJTheEconomist

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Ed Warner

Pointless and grubby: it's time the CBI was put out of business

To answer the question posed by Alistair Osborne in his column last week, if the CBI ceased to exist there would be no need to reinvent it. Mired in allegations of sexual misconduct, the most efficient outcome — and perhaps the most appropriate, given the lobby group's remit — would be an orderly winding down and the return of any remaining reserves to its members. Others may prefer to leave a residual taskforce to fund donations to deserving causes.

The problem is that the last published balance sheet (for December 2021) showed a net asset position of only £100,000 once a ring-fenced pension fund surplus is excluded. Unless there was a transformatory inflow of funds in 2022, it's probably safe to assume that the combination of legal bills and lost fees from deserting members aghast at the staff behaviours cited in the media will wipe out the CBI. Absent a bailout, that is. And who would fancy being its white knight?

'MPs are more likely to be swayed by what's in the public domain than is whispered to them'

The CBI's last annual report is very, very long on statements about equality and diversity. Ironically (or maybe not), it includes a series of bullet points about the wellbeing of its staff. For all the care clearly lavished on the text and imagery laced through the document, its front cover features a photo of five men and no women: Rishi Sunak, the chancellor at that time, and four white blokes including Tony Danker, the now-controversial director-general, arms on hips and legs akimbo in power-stance mode. I'd say you couldn't make it up — but clearly someone did. Danker is sidelined at the moment while investigations are pursued.

I've a personal antipathy towards lobbying, if not all individual lobbyists. When the subject is raised at board meetings by those keen that an organisation should work the corridors of power to influence policymakers, I have a tendency to glaze over. Until it comes to signing off hefty retainers for consultants.

In my experience, politicians — voracious consumers of media, from traditional to social — are more likely to be swayed by what is in the public domain than what is whispered to them by an agent of an obviously interested party. That's not to rule out the possible impact on the lazy, suggestible or corruptible (as recent "stings" by the media show, including the one orchestrated by The Times last week). It's just that lobbying is an inefficient and, let's face it, rather grubby way of going about one's business.

The CBI is the grandaddy of lobbyists, but one with old age that has lost any sharpness of mind it might once have had. The vast majority of its members are counted by virtue of being part of the slew of trade associations affiliated to it. It's said that only 1,500 companies are direct members, though the CBI would not comment on that. And that number is bound to shrink in the rush to gain distance from the scandal. In claiming to speak for all business, it has created a "why not?" rationale for affiliation. Now, though, the question in boardrooms across the land will be: "Why?"

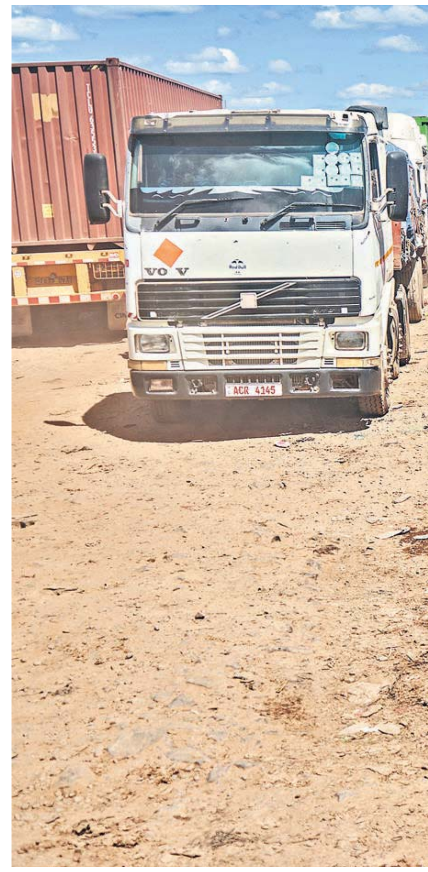
Business doesn't get to vote in elections. Its owners, from pension and investment funds to individual proprietors, rely in a capitalist state on governments to do right by them as an extension of doing right by the electorate. On matters of interest to the generality of companies, it is usually pretty clear what is pro-business and what isn't. Little wonder that the CBI usually appears to be simply stating the obvious.

Beyond that, it is not possible to talk of business as an amorphous mass. Indeed, the interests of different member groups within the CBI may often conflict. Few are likely to read through a CBI report and nod approvingly at every claim or opinion made on their behalf. Better, then, that big businesses save their money, stop sending aspirant young managers to time-consuming conferences of minimal practical value and focus, instead, on shouting publicly about the specific needs of their own enterprises.

Ed Warner sits on a number of company boards. He is writing in a personal capacity



Bank failures, oil disputes and aid on the agenda for embattled IMF



China's refusal to join debt talks is a for

Mehreen Khan Economics Editor

The International Monetary Fund is hosting its first in-person spring meetings in Washington since the pandemic this week. But rather than relief at the return of normalcy, an air of foreboding is hanging over the finance ministers and central bankers.

It's been less than a month since financial panic wiped out three US banks and consigned Credit Suisse, one of Switzerland's most storied lenders, to the history books.

Financial tremors have calmed but the ramifications of the worst bout of banking stress since the 2008 crisis will dominate the six-day gathering of the world's most powerful policymakers.

The US government, which often uses the Washington-based fund to push its agenda on poorer countries, has been privately criticised by international regulators for its decision to guarantee all deposits at stricken lenders, including Silicon Valley Bank. Europeans baulked at the Biden administration throwing out the post-financial crisis handbook for how to deal with bank failures at an early phase.

Switzerland's decision to impose losses on Credit Suisse's private bondholders ahead of the Middle Eastern sovereign wealth funds that held its shares was also met with dismay and has prompted legal challenges. The IMF's jamboree is the first chance for ministers and central bankers to thrash out whether the rules they designed to wind up failed banks without making taxpayers foot the bill will ever be put in practice.

Sir Paul Tucker, a former deputy governor at the Bank of England who helped design the post-2008 financial regulation, says the US and Swiss decisions were "quite extraordinary, and not in a good way".

"The Federal Reserve and Federal Deposit Insurance Corporation formally dropped resolution planning for larger regional banking groups in 2019, even though they didn't have a plan and were openly warned of the dangers. Meanwhile the Swiss had a plan, had agreed it with everyone, and then dropped it," he said.



Janet Yellen, US Treasury secretary, has been forced to assure taxpayers that Washington will not sign a blank cheque to bail out all depositors to stop the panic from spreading. Yellen told an audience at Yale University last week that deposit flight from small banks had calmed, helping buy time for the US regulators to determine what went wrong with Silicon Valley Bank. "Outflows from smaller and medium-sized banks are diminishing and matters are stabilising, but it's a situation we're watching very closely," she said. "I don't think there's a fundamental problem with the banking system."

Financial stress will weigh on the IMF's latest round of forecasts for the world economy, which were tentatively revised up at the start of the year on the back of optimism over China's economic reopening and declining global energy prices.

That optimism has been short lived. Kristalina Georgieva, the fund's Bulgarian managing director, has warned that global growth will average about 3 per cent over the next five years, the weakest run for the world economy since the recession of the early 1990s.

Last week's decision by the world's main oil exporters to cut production risks putting another dampener on growth by keeping stubborn inflation uncomfortably high. The production cut from Opec has been criticised by Yellen as "unconstructive" and will worsen strained ties between western countries and the de facto Opec leader, Saudi Arabia. "With rising geopolitical tensions and with inflation still running high, a robust recovery remains elusive," Georgieva said before the new forecasts, to be published tomorrow.

The geopolitical fractures are also undermining the IMF's predominant role as a multilateral lender to poor countries in need of emergency aid. For the past year, the fund has been at loggerheads with China over its refusal to take part in debt relief talks for stricken nations that have been forced to default on their loans.

Zambia is among the debtors caught in the crossfire, with China, one of its biggest external creditors, demanding other lenders including the fund take losses as part of a wider debt restructuring agreement. The IMF is unable to unlock its $1.3 billion programme for the southern African nation until China commits to debt relief.

China's recalcitrance has angered the US and stoked diplomatic tensions between the two superpowers. They are already on a collision course over global trade, Taiwan and China's relationship with Russia. The spat has rendered the "global framework" for debt relief signed by the G20 nations a failure two years after it was agreed.

Jay Shambaugh, Washington's top financial diplomat at the US Treasury, urged his Chinese counterparts to keep talking and avoid turning debt relief for poor nations into another bilateral spat with the US. "Why should China listen to us? This is not a bilateral issue but a multilateral one. We have been through this longer than they have. Being able to talk is crucial," he said.

For her part, Georgieva has said she will chase Zambia's creditors "until they



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ZINYANGE AUNTONY/BLOOMBERG/GETTY IMAGES



worry Zambia, which relies on its credit and the IMF's Kristalina Georgieva, left

deliver". Stalled talks are an existential threat to the fund, which is sitting on piles of aid it cannot send to countries under its own lending rules.

The IMF finally agreed to a long-awaited $15.6 billion aid package to Ukraine last month, giving it a vital cash injection a year after Russia's invasion. The fund had to bend its own lending rules to provide to a country in the middle of a war. It may be forced to resort to similar emergency carve-outs to keep the organisation relevant in a fractured world economy.

Who will step up for most vulnerable?

Andrew Mitchell
Njuguna Ndung'u
Commentary

As ministers gather in Washington for the IMF and World Bank spring meetings, high on the agenda must be reform of the international financial system.

These meetings come against a backdrop of crises: in development and climate change, while for the first time in decades extreme poverty is on the rise.

At the forefront of African leaders' minds at September's Climate Action summit in Nairobi will be the millions facing a vicious cycle of high vulnerability to climate change and low investment in climate adaptation.

With 50 million people facing severe food insecurity across East Africa, we must break this cycle. We need a better and bigger international financial system, as championed by the Bridgetown initiative of Mia Mottley, the prime minister of Barbados.

We must redouble our efforts to end extreme poverty, rejecting the false choice between development and climate.

As our two countries, the UK and Kenya, demonstrated through a climate finance agreement at Cop27, Africa can lead the way in choosing sustainable and resilient growth, with women and girls at the heart of it, as the path to job creation. We must also reduce global CO_2 emissions. Between 1990 and 2021, the UK economy grew 65 per cent while CO_2 emissions fell 48 per cent, showing you can do both. National policies should drive this, supported by the international system.

Multilateral development banks must do more. They stretched to address the pandemic and the consequences of Russia's invasion of Ukraine. However, the finance available will fall next year.

The World Bank is not fully leveraging its fund for the poorest countries — the International Development Association — which has a larger capital base than any other. It should be stretched to support countries like Kenya.

The African Development Bank sharing risk with the UK government and City of London insurance markets to release an additional $2 billion for climate finance shows what is possible with innovation. Amending the articles of the African Development Fund to facilitate market borrowing could release an extra $25 billion.

The IMF provided $14 billion to low-income countries in 2020 and the first half of 2021, but many no longer get the volume of support needed. Only 16 countries have recently contributed to the IMF's facility for the poorest countries. Others should step up.

The international community must meet its commitment to channel $100 billion of special drawing rights to vulnerable countries through the IMF's trusts, and explore whether we can channel those drawing rights through multilateral development banks to multiply impact.

With many countries facing a potential debt crisis, the G20 common framework, where G20 and Paris Club nations co-ordinate debt treatments, must deliver to clearer, more predictable timelines.

More private finance can be unlocked, too. Multilateral development banks should support the whole investment cycle, from policies to mobilising investors, adapting business models to recycle capital faster and reduce risk.

Finally, we need a system that deals with shocks through better planning and finance that flows rapidly when crises strike. The UK's work with African Risk Capacity to insure Somalia against drought triggered an early and rapid payout.

Last year, the UK's Export Credit Agency offered clauses in its loan agreements to suspend repayments when a shock hits. Other lenders should follow to free up fiscal space when crisis-hit governments need to invest in recovery.

To transform our international financial system, we must take bold actions on extreme poverty, climate change and crisis preparedness. This is the only way to achieve our development and climate goals.

Andrew Mitchell, UK development minister, and Njuguna Ndung'u, Kenyan finance minister, are governors of the World Bank for their respective countries.



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Register

Obituaries

Benjamin Ferencz

Last surviving prosecutor from the Nuremberg trials who secured convictions of leaders of the roaming SS extermination squads

"I was designated chief prosecutor at the biggest murder case in history. I was 27 years old. It was my first case."

Few legal careers can have seen such an extraordinary debut as that of Ben Ferencz, a diminutive ex-US soldier and Harvard law graduate, who was in 1947 put in charge at Nuremberg of a major prosecution of Nazi war criminals.

This was not the trial at Nuremberg of the best-known Nazi leaders, including Hermann Goering, who were convicted in 1946 by the International Military Tribunal, nor of those running the death camps such as Auschwitz. It was instead the prosecution supervised by the United States of those responsible for over a million previously unknown murders that Ferencz and his research team had discovered. The murders were committed by the Einsatzgruppen mobile SS death squads that had roamed central and eastern Europe, killing huge numbers of Jews, gypsies and others — men, women and children — who the Nazis had decided to "eliminate".

Ferencz, the son of a Jewish immigrant family to the US, had been recruited to a specialist war crimes investigation unit in the US army because he had studied the legal basis of war crimes trials at Harvard. He began collecting evidence as the war came to an end, visiting concentration camps including Buchenwald and Dachau as they were

Collecting evidence from Buchenwald and Dachau, 'I had peered into Hell'

liberated. There were "people lying on the ground, you could not tell if they were dead or alive" he recalled later. "I witnessed a deadly vision I can never forget … I had peered into Hell."

After his discharge from the army, Ferencz was then recruited by the chief prosecutor Telford Taylor to join the US team at the Nuremberg trials established by the victorious Allied powers. Taylor noted that his army files said he was "occasionally insubordinate", to which Ferencz replied: "That's not correct, sir. I am usually insubordinate. I don't take orders that I know are stupid or illegal."

He was sent with a team of 50 researchers to Berlin to look for first-hand evidence to use against the Nazi leadership. At first the focus was on the death camps, attempting to find records of who had been sent there, how many had been killed and who had been in charge. Then one of his researchers discovered a file containing the daily reports sent back with characteristically grim Nazi efficiency to ministries and officials in Berlin by the Einsatzgruppen as they went about their horrific activities. Ferencz remembered beginning to go through these documents "with a little adding machine I had … by the time I had added up to a million people murdered, I said 'that's enough'".

He immediately flew back to Nuremberg and told Taylor they would have to stage an additional trial. Taylor initially objected that there were not enough resources and time but Ferencz countered: "I have in my hands absolute proof of mass murder on a scale never conceived in human history." Taylor relented once Ferencz agreed to take on the prosecution in addition to his existing work.







Ferencz at the Einsatzgruppen trial in 1947; the 2018 documentary Prosecuting Evil; with his wife Gertrude at Berchtesgaden in 1946; in the US army in 1943

Twenty-two men involved in organising and commanding the Einsatzgruppen were tracked down in prisoner-of-war camps and elsewhere and put on trial for the murder of more than a million people. These included almost 34,000 women and children who were shot or buried alive in a ravine near Kyiv, and 25,000 Latvian Jews from Riga's ghetto who were ordered to lie down in pits before being shot.

Ferencz decided not to summon surviving witnesses to the atrocities, knowing they would be both traumatised and challenged by aggressive defence layers. Instead he opted simply to call a single witness to authenticate the evidence he had found in Berlin. "We shall establish beyond the realm of doubt," he said in his opening statement, "facts which before the dark decade of the Third Reich would have seemed incredible."

The trial lasted six months, five of them taken up with defence submissions. All of the defendants were found guilty of crimes against humanity and war crimes, and 13 were sentenced to death. Ferencz remembered seeing them appear in a lift that brought them up from the makeshift prison beneath the Nuremberg courtroom. They would step forward, the judge pronounced his sentence, the lift door would close and then they would drop down again "as if into Hell".

However, the implementation of the judicial process at Nuremberg was often limited by wider political and other factors, including the emergence of Cold War tensions and the Allies' increasing focus on reconstruction rather than justice. In the end only four of the defendants were executed, and the others found guilty were released after only a few years in prison.

Ferencz said that he was interested not only in individual cases but in establishing a "rule of law that would protect humanity in future against that type of atrocious crime". And he was committed to ensuring that victims of Nazism were not forgotten in postwar Germany. "It was not just winning the war and punishing the criminals but helping the victims, which was the next step," he said. He remained in West Germany for a decade, working on areas such as claims of restitution for confiscated property and the payment of compensation by the new German government.

In 1957 Ferencz returned to the US to try to pick up the threads of the legal career he had begun working towards as the bright, ambitious child of impoverished and illiterate immigrants.

Benjamin Berell Ferencz was born in 1920 in a village in Transylvania that had been transferred from Hungary to Romania. His Jewish parents, Joseph and Sarah, faced persecution and decided to emigrate to the US, taking young Benjamin and his sister on the open deck of a passenger ship across the Atlantic. "We arrived at New York harbour with no money, no language, a few relatives who could put us up for a night or two," he said.

His father found work as a janitor and the family crowded into the cellar where he worked in the Hell's Kitchen area of New York, full of gang warfare. "As it was a time of prohibition, breaking the law was considered a good thing," he remembered. However, "I was a very small person, so gang warfare was not exactly my thing. Very early on I decided that I would like to do something about crime prevention."

Family life became more complicated after his parents, who had been in an arranged marriage, divorced. Ferencz began to fashion his own escape from such circumstances through education. His potential was spotted initially by teachers at a school in the Bronx and eventually he won a place at Harvard Law School, where his studies included research for a professor into how war crimes might be prosecuted. He "read every book on war crimes in the Harvard law library". That — after a spell in the US artillery and combat experience in Europe from 1943 — would later catapult him into his Nuremberg role.

After marriage in 1946 to his childhood sweetheart, Gertrude, he claimed to have wanted 12 children ("I figured it was cheaper by the dozen"). In the end they had four. Keri worked in computing and later became an interpreter. They had two other daughters: Robin became a civil servant and social worker, and Nina worked as a lawyer for the Environmental Protection Agency. Their son Donald became a tax lawyer. Gertrude died in 2019 and he is survived by his children.

When he returned to New York, Ferencz established a private law practice. Yet he remained drawn to the idea of working towards a global legal system and countering what he termed "the glorification of war". He was a strong opponent of the Vietnam War, arguing that "the use of armed force to obtain a political goal is a filthy, dirty, rotten way of proceeding. It should be condemned as a crime against humanity." And he began to advocate what he hoped would be a new framework for international law enforcement. His books included *Defining International Aggression — The Search for World Peace* (1975) and *Planethood*, which he cowrote in 1988.

Equipped with his mantra "law not war", he spoke at world peace conferences. He was involved in negotiations to set up an International Criminal Court in the 1990s and tried to persuade the Americans to accept its jurisdiction. His key focus, linking back to his Nuremberg experiences, was to establish that armed aggression was the supreme international crime. He reminded his audiences from his own experience that such aggression led to other devastating crimes, such as mass rape. "The illegal use of armed force by a leader, knowing that it will inevitably kill large numbers of innocent civilians," he argued, "is a crime against humanity in the truest sense of the word."

In 2019 he was the subject of a documentary, *Prosecuting Evil: The Extraordinary World of Ben Ferencz*, directed by Barry Avrich. Ferencz lived modestly into retirement in Florida, wearing cheap clothes, eating plain food, swimming regularly and remaining full of enthusiasm for new ideas and projects. He donated much of what he had earned from his legal career to the Simon Skjodt Center for the Prevention of Genocide, at the US Holocaust Museum in Washington.

"Nuremberg taught me that creating a world of tolerance and compassion would be a long and arduous task," he reflected. At the same time he marvelled at the role he had played, and at the accolades he was awarded, such as one of the postwar German government's highest honours. "This has happened in my lifetime to a little boy from a village in Transylvania. It is fantastic, it is incredible."

Benjamin Ferencz, lawyer and war crimes prosecutor, was born on March 11, 1920. He died on April 7, 2023, aged 103

Register

Sir David Harrison

Eminent chemical engineer and former master of Selwyn College, Cambridge, who advised the government on nuclear safety

When David Harrison was deciding what kind of career to follow, the choice was not immediately obvious. He had loved the study of history at school and recalled: "I thought a career in the diplomatic service might be fun, but my science was better than my languages."

And science, at which he had excelled at school, won out in the end, as he became one of the most distinguished chemical engineers and scientists of his generation. His research specialised in fluidisation, but his impact and influence was felt far beyond the chemistry lab. He became an academic leader, serving as vice-chancellor of Keele and Exeter universities, and at Cambridge as master of Selwyn College and deputy vice-chancellor.

In broader public life he was a strong advocate of improved scientific education in schools, proper appreciation of engineering and better access to higher education for disadvantaged social groups and women. His expertise was also employed by government and parliament, as he headed a nuclear safety advisory committee.

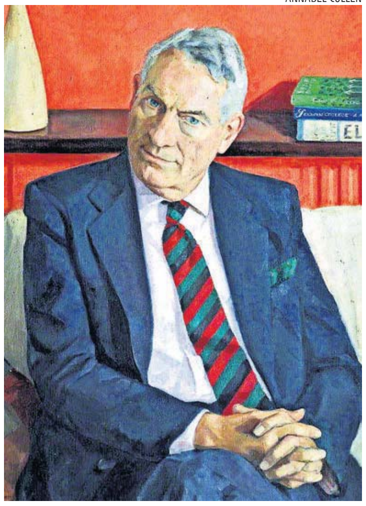
He was born to Harold and Lavinia Harrison in 1930 in Essex, where his father was a civil engineer. His schooling was partly in the northeast of England after he was evacuated during the war to live with a relative in Sunderland. (Ironically Sunderland suffered more bombing than his home town of Clacton.)

After National Service with the Royal Electrical and Mechanical Engineers he began a long association with Selwyn College, arriving as an undergraduate in 1950. His PhD in physical chemistry awarded in 1956 earned him an unusually swift promotion to fellow of the college. He went on to play a significant role in the new Cambridge department of chemical engineering. His initial research had focused on the heat capacities of liquids, and he worked on fluidisation, including phenomena such as the behaviour of bubbles passing through liquids and the fluidisation of fine particles.

He was married in 1962 to Sheila Debes, a teacher, whom he had met at a Cambridge party. She survives him with their son, Michael, an accountant, corporate financier and civil servant, and a daughter, Sarah, a solicitor and magistrate. Another son, Tony, died while a student in 1986.

He led the boycott of an Oxbridge-linked club that did not admit women

ANNABEL CULLEN



Harrison by Annabel Cullen in 2000

Among Harrison's college posts was admissions tutor. Several decades before elite universities began to focus on widening their intake, he made great personal efforts to persuade state schools with no tradition of sending pupils to Oxbridge to change their minds. While individual ability mattered, Harrison argued, "without a doubt the quality of teaching and the level of expectation at any given school play a large part in determining whether a child succeeds or not".

His intervention, as well as his personal encouragement, transformed many lives. His urbane, sympathetic manner also helped to defuse tensions in college life in the 1960s and 1970s over reform of examinations and paternalistic university traditions, as well as international issues such as the Vietnam war and apartheid in South Africa.

Beneath Harrison's charm, however, lay a steely determination to run things efficiently. Meetings were concluded as swiftly as possible, using his calmly analytical approach. Such administrative and networking skills equipped him well for a career beyond academic research. In 1979 he became vice-chancellor at the University of Keele, helping to steer it through tough times as finances became tighter under the Thatcher government. In 1984 he moved to the vice-chancellor's role at the University of Exeter, where he remained for a decade.

In 1994 he returned to Selwyn College as master, and from 1997 was also deputy and pro-vice-chancellor at Cambridge University as it sought to modernise its governance from an ancient, highly complex balance of powers between academics, colleges and the university as a whole. He worked over several decades with Homerton College in Cambridge, helping it to achieve full college status. The college named a Harrison House and Harrison Drive after him.

His knighthood in 1997 was awarded both for services to education and for his contribution to nuclear safety. He chaired the nuclear safety advisory committee, giving guidance to the government on the role of nuclear power generally, as well as on specific areas including the siting, operation and decommissioning of nuclear facilities.

In public and political debate Harrison was keen to improve the quality of scientific education and awareness. "We seem to be witnessing a general decline in the public appreciation of science — basic knowledge that everyone in society should possess," he once said. "Teachers make the difference."

He believed in persuading more people to acquire and value scientific knowledge. He worked as director with the Salter's Institute charity to promote initiatives such as chemistry clubs and festivals, showing teenagers how exciting chemical research could be. Another concern was for the work of engineers across all kinds of national and economic enterprises to be understood and appreciated more widely.

Harrison hoped also that many more women would become successful scientists. He had been an early advocate of Selwyn admitting women as students. One of his most striking interventions on gender equality came in 1995 when he discovered that the Oxford and Cambridge Club in London not only excluded women from full membership but denied them access to facilities including its library. Harrison resigned his club membership linked to his role as master of Selwyn, organised a boycott by other heads of Oxbridge colleges and publicised the issue in the media, leading to a change of policy by the embarrassed club.

Harrison retired, up to a point, at the age of 70, still greatly in demand. His wife once joked that he mostly took on jobs that were unpaid and took large amounts of time. However, there was now more space for other interests, including Lake District walking, cycling and reading history. He was a devoted churchgoer and appreciator of church music, chairing the council of the Royal School of Church Music.

He had been, in all his academic and public roles, a formidable member of what some would term "the great and the good". Yet he had also valued his work with those starting out from the bottom of the social pile, knowing the huge difference educational opportunity could make. The novelist Robert Harris, who had known Harrison since the age of 17, described him simply as "a wonderful educator — generous, wise, humane". And to the end he remained alert and engaging, writing to each of his grandchildren the day before he died.

Sir David Harrison, chemical engineer and educationist, was born on May 3, 1930. He died on March 27, 2023, aged 92

Nora Forster

Publishing heiress and music promoter whose marriage to the Sex Pistols' frontman Johnny Rotten endured for 44 years

Nora Forster and John Lydon first set eyes on each other one day in 1975 at Sex, the fashion store on Kings Road in London run by Vivienne Westwood and Malcolm McLaren.

For Lydon it was love at first sight. "She shone, she glowed from way across the other side of the room," he recalled. For Forster, not so much. "Nora loathed me at first sight," he admitted in his memoirs.

Fourteen years older than Lydon, who was about to become rock music's enfant terrible as the Sex Pistols' lead singer Johnny Rotten, Forster could have been forgiven for failing to fall immediately for a spotty teenage punk. Yet she soon changed her mind and she and Lydon married in a register office in Düsseldorf in 1979.

Their marriage was not publicised at the time and seven years later the London Evening Standard described Forster as Lydon's "secret wife". They were married for 44 years until her death. After she was diagnosed with Alzheimer's disease, he cared for her devotedly.

"When I make a commitment it's for ever and I stand by that and I'm very proud to do the best I can for her," he told The Sunday Times in a moving interview in 2021. "What's an illness between true friends, man and wife, lovers, whatever you want to call it? We are a proper pair of people who love and adore each other."

Born Nora Maier in Munich in 1942, she was the daughter of Franz Karl Maier, a lawyer who later became the proprietor and editor of the magazine Der Spiegel and the newspaper Der Tagesspiegel. He died of a heart attack in 1984. His daughter once claimed that it was the shock of her "secret marriage" to Lydon that had killed him. As his heir, it was said that on his death she inherited $120 million and she became a substantial shareholder in his media empire.

FIN COSTELLO



After Forster was diagnosed with Alzheimer's, John Lydon became her carer

After leaving school she went to work for her father's company and before she was out of her teens she had married Frank Forster, a German pop singer in the sentimental mid-European schlager style.

In 1962 she gave birth to a daughter, Ariane Forster, later to become known as Ari Up, a singer with the British all-female punk rock band the Slits. She died of breast cancer at the age of 48 (obituary, October 28, 2010) and Nora and Lydon became the guardians of her three children.

There were no children from their own marriage but Lydon was a committed surrogate parent. "You should see the teachers' faces at parents' evenings," he told The Times in 2012. "Oh, how they enjoy explaining grammar to Johnny Rotten!"

By the mid-1960s Forster had become a music promoter in Munich, working with touring American and British acts including Jimi Hendrix, Wishbone Ash and Yes. When her first marriage fell apart at the end of the 1960s, she moved to London with her daughter and began a relationship with the guitarist Chris Spedding, who would later produce the first Sex Pistols' recordings.

She resumed promoting bands in London, holding court at her Shepherd's Bush home to a bohemian set that included Joe Strummer and Yes singer Jon Anderson, who became her daughter's godfather.

She was encouraging of Ari when she formed the Slits in 1976 at the age of 14. When the group supported the Clash on the White Riot tour, she accompanied her daughter, earning the nickname "Punk Mummy Warrior".

She was equally supportive of Lydon through two turbulent years of the Sex Pistols and when the group broke up acrimoniously in 1978, she was his rock as he put together a new band, Public Image Ltd (PiL).

By the early 1980s they had moved to Los Angeles, buying Mae West's former home at Marina del Rey, close to Venice Beach. There were also homes in Malibu and London.

It was after the death of Forster's daughter that Lydon began to notice his wife's slow decline. "It was small issues like constantly losing keys and it builds up over time. It happened so gradually, so slowly," he noted. She was eventually diagnosed in 2018, although she remained physically fit. "She has always been an outdoorsy, gregarious, fun-loving, any-adventure kind of person. If we go for a walk along the beach, by God, she'd be out of sight in minutes," he told The Sunday Times.

However, Alzheimer's meant she required constant attention. Refusing to put her in a nursing home, Lydon became her round-the-clock carer. She accidentally started fires in two of their homes and became confined to the house at Marina del Rey which the couple called their "castle". As she deteriorated, she tended to resort to her first language. Lydon had never learnt German and so communication became increasingly difficult. Yet he put on a brave face and said that he felt blessed because she at least remembered who he was. "She doesn't forget me. She forgets everything else but not me."

His final act of devotion was the song *Hawaii*, which he wrote as a potential Irish entry for the 2023 Eurovision Song Contest. He dedicated it to Nora and to "everyone going through tough times on the journey of life with the person they care for the most". The song, he added poignantly, was also "a message of hope that love conquers all".

Nora Forster, music promoter, was born on November 6, 1942. She died of complications from Alzheimer's disease on April 6, 2023, aged 80

Law Report

Afghans working for the BBC entitled to consideration for relocation in UK

King's Bench Division
April 10, 2023
R (CX1 and others) v secretary of state for defence and another
Before Mr Justice Lane
[2023] EWHC 284 (Admin)

Afghan nationals who worked closely with the BBC or other news organisations could be classified as having worked "alongside" a government department, in partnership with or closely supporting that department for the purposes of being considered for relocation under category 4 of the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy.

Mr Justice Lane so held when: (i) allowing in part the claims of eight Afghans for judicial review of the secretary of state for defence's refusal of their applications for relocation under the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy; but (ii) dismissing their challenge to the secretary of state for the Home Office's refusal to exercise her discretion under section 3 of the Immigration Act 1971 to grant them leave to enter the United Kingdom outside the Immigration Rules (leave outside the rules).

Adam Straw KC, **Catherine Meredith** and **Donnchadh Greene** for the claimants; **David Blundell KC**, **Nicholas Chapman** and **Natasha Jackson** for the defendants.

MR JUSTICE LANE said that the claimants said that they and their families became at high risk of being killed or otherwise harmed by the Taliban as a result of their work as journalists. Some of the claimants had, as a result, left Afghanistan, while others remained in hiding in that country. Each of the claimants made applications to be relocated to the UK, along with their families, under the defence secretary's Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy. Those applications were refused.

The Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy originated as a means of showing commitment and paying a debt of gratitude to those who worked for the government and supported the UK armed forces' mission in Afghanistan.

There were four categories for assistance under the policy against which all applications were assessed. Relocation to the UK was offered to those falling within categories 1 and 2, or who fell within category 4 and in respect of whom it was decided that relocation should be offered on a case-by-case basis.

To be eligible for the scheme under category 4 an applicant had to demonstrate that he: (1) worked in Afghanistan alongside a government department, in partnership with or closely supporting and assisting that department; (2) in the course of that work, he made a substantive and positive contribution towards the achievement of the government's military objectives or national security objectives; and (3) because of that work he was at an elevated risk of targeted attacks, death or serious injury.

The present claimants' applications were refused on the ground that they did not "work alongside" or "closely support" the government's military and national security objectives.

The claimants' first ground of challenge was that the defence secretary had failed to give adequate reasons for that decision. They argued that such a decision, which merely gave as its reasons the fact that certain criteria were not met, without explaining why, had to be unlawful; at least, when it was not apparent to the recipient why he had been rejected as ineligible.

That submission had to be rejected. Since the duty to give reasons arose from the duty of fairness at common law, what fairness demanded would inevitably be fact and context-specific.

The facts and context of decision-making in Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy cases were extremely important. Over 128,000 applications had been received since the scheme opened in April 2021. That greatly exceeded the number of individuals estimated as even potentially eligible for it, which had been 16,500, comprising both principals and dependants.

Were the defence secretary required to provide bespoke decision letters that included detailed reasoning for every single case, that would inhibit how quickly eligibility decisions could be made. It would also divert resources from supporting the relocation of eligible applicants, besides having high costs.

Given that a significant number of individuals making applications under the policy were likely to be at high risk of harm from the Taliban (if still in Afghanistan), the need to process their applications quickly was plainly of great importance. That had to inform directly the court's view of what fairness requires.

Overall, the use of template letters allowed applicants to understand the basis of the defence secretary's eligibility decision, while supporting the provision of a fair, accessible and consistent service, which was, in all the circumstances, proportionate.

Taken as a whole, the evidence firmly demonstrated that the defence secretary's approach to the giving of reasons in decision letters concerning eligibility under the policy was compatible with the common law duty of fairness.

The essential question remained whether the relevant wording of category 4 at the date of the decisions was such as to make it possible for the claimants to be treated as eligible for relocation under the Afghan Relocations and Assistance Policy.

In order to satisfy condition 1 of category 4, the person concerned had to have worked in Afghanistan alongside a UK government department either (i) in partnership with it; or (ii) closely supporting and assisting it. As a general matter, independent journalists might find it difficult to satisfy that aspect of category 4.

There was debate concerning what was meant by having "worked … alongside". At one extreme, merely having been physically alongside, say, a UK military unit as a result of sharing a ride with that unit to the front line, was very likely to be insufficient. On the other hand, a pattern of travelling and living (or being embedded) with British military units might be different, as might significant activities which were closely aligned with the "democracy-building" activities of a government department. In every case it would, of course, still be necessary to meet the other requirements of category 4.

Condition 2 of category 4 required the person, in the course of their work etc, to have made a substantive and positive contribution towards the achievement of the UK government's military objectives or the UK government's national security objectives. As a general matter, Afghan journalists were likely to find it difficult to satisfy that condition.

However, the provision of intelligence was clearly a way in which condition 2 could be satisfied, subject to that having the necessary substantive and positive qualities.

More broadly, national security objectives (which were not exhaustively defined in terms of, for example, counterterrorism) could properly include significant contributions to the building of democratic, open and transparent systems, as well as informing the Afghan population of such things as the corruption of the Taliban. All of that could be done by an independent journalist working for the BBC.

The present claimants were held to be ineligible because they had worked for the BBC and that organisation was not part of the government. The articulated rationale appeared to be that, since the BBC was independent of the government, a person working for the BBC could never, in that capacity, be said to be working alongside a UK government department. That was wrong.

The caseworkers had erred in confining their decisions to the issue of whether working for the BBC amounted to working for the government, at the expense of considering whether, on the particular factual matrices of the claimants, a journalist working for the BBC or any other news organisation could be said to have worked alongside a government department, in partnership with or closely supporting that department.

Notwithstanding the challenges the claimants might face in making good their cases under category 4, there was a more than fanciful prospect of a different outcome, so far as eligibility was concerned, if their cases were considered on the correct basis.

While the Taliban's perception of the relationship between the BBC and the UK government, which was that there was no difference between the two, could not alter the ordinary meaning of the words contained in the policy, that perception was clearly relevant so far as satisfying condition 3 of category 4, that there was an elevated risk of targeted attacks, death or serious injury "because of that work".

The claimants additionally argued that in March last year that the home secretary unlawfully refused to consider their applications for "leave outside the rules" under section 3 of the Immigration Act 1971 because her refusal was made pursuant to an unlawful policy.

The policy was said to be unlawful because it required persons in the claimants' position to apply using an online form that they could not reasonably be expected to use. The form was designed for visitors or workers and, therefore, applicants for leave outside the rules had to necessarily submit false information (for example, concerning a non-existent sponsor) to complete the form.

However, the existence of the free-text boxes in the visa application forms negated the claimants' concerns. Those boxes enabled applicants to explain what of the preceding information was inaccurate, having been generated solely for the purpose of enabling the application form to be completed and submitted.

The declarations of truth at the end encompassed the totality of what the applicant had said in the form, including in the free-text box. It was therefore unrealistic to conclude that anyone would be deterred from submitting a leave-outside-the-rules application on such a basis. The claimants had not come near to showing that the home secretary's approach was unreasonable to the point of being unlawful.

Solicitors: **Leigh Day, Solicitors**; **Treasury Solicitor**.

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THE TIMES

Births, Marriages and Deaths

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AND He said to them, "Do not be alarmed. You seek Jesus of Nazareth, who was crucified. He has risen; he is not here. See the place where they laid him. But go, tell his disciples and Peter that he is going before you to Galilee. There you will see him, just as he told you."
Mark 16.6-7 (ESV)

Bible verses are provided by the Bible Society

Births

ENGLANDER on 23rd January 2023 to Sophie (née Wyatt) and Simon, a son, Max Peter Wyatt.

Deaths

WHITE Peter Robin Fleetwood on 26th March 2023, aged 83, passed away peacefully after short illness. Much-loved husband, brother, father, father-in-law and grandfather. He will be greatly missed. Funeral service at West Herts Crematorium. on 24 April at 2.20pm. Inquiries to Phillips Funeral Services 01727 812244.

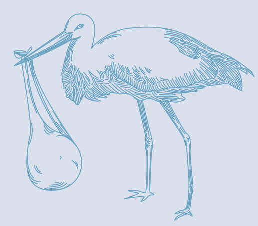
In Memoriam - Private

WILLIAM (BILL) PARKINSON 7 May 1929 — 10 April 2013. A decade has gone by but not a day passes we do not think of you with love.

There is no Court Circular for April 8 or 9

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Today Blustery with spells of rain and heavy showers, thundery at times. Max 15C (59F), min -3C (27F)

Around Britain

Key: b=bright, c=cloud, d=drizzle, pc=partly cloudy du=dull, f=fair, fg=fog, h=hail, m=mist, r=rain, sh=showers, sl=sleet, sn=snow, s=sun, t=thunder *=previous day **=data not available

	Temp C midday yesterday		Rain mm 24 hrs to 5pm yesterday	Sun hr*
Aberdeen	7	M	0.0	0.4
Aberporth	13	C	0.0	2.0
Anglesey	13	C	0.0	6.5
Aviemore	11	PC	0.0	5.5
Barnstaple	15	PC	0.0	**
Bedford	12	B	0.0	**
Belfast	11	C	0.2	4.3
Birmingham	13	PC	0.0	**
Bournemouth	12	S	0.0	4.5
Bridlington	9	PC	0.0	**
Bristol	13	PC	0.0	5.2
Camborne	13	C	0.0	8.8
Cardiff	13	S	0.0	1.6
Edinburgh	12	PC	0.0	5.0
Eskdalemuir	10	C	0.0	7.7
Glasgow	13	C	0.0	4.7
Hereford	10	C	0.0	**
Herstmonceux	10	M	0.0	4.3
Ipswich	12	M	0.0	2.8
Isle of Man	10	C	0.0	5.8
Isle of Wight	12	M	0.0	**
Jersey	13	S	0.0	2.0
Keswick	10	B	0.0	**
Kinloss	14	C	0.0	4.6
Leeds	7	M	0.0	**
Lerwick	7	C	0.0	4.5
Leuchars	10	M	0.0	5.2
Lincoln	9	M	0.0	3.6
Liverpool	11	S	0.0	**
London	14	S	0.0	5.6
Lyneham	12	B	0.0	4.1
Manchester	11	B	0.0	7.5
Margate	10	PC	0.2	0.0
Milford Haven	11	C	0.0	**
Newcastle	8	M	0.0	**
Nottingham	11	M	0.0	4.4
Orkney	7	C	0.0	7.6
Oxford	13	PC	0.0	**
Plymouth	13	PC	0.0	**
Portland	12	S	0.0	**
Scilly, St Mary's	12	B	0.0	**
Shoreham	13	M	0.0	6.6
Shrewsbury	11	PC	0.0	4.0
Snowdonia	13	S	0.0	**
Southend	12	S	0.0	4.1
South Uist	11	C	0.8	**
Stornoway	11	C	0.0	3.8
Tiree	10	C	0.6	6.8
Whitehaven	10	B	0.0	0.0
Wick	8	M	0.0	**
Yeovilton	14	C	0.0	4.8

The world

All readings local midday yesterday

Alicante	21	S	Madeira	21	PC
Amsterdam	13	B	Madrid	22	S
Athens	18	PC	Malaga	19	S
Auckland	22	PC	Mallorca	19	PC
Bahrain	32	S	Malta	17	PC
Bangkok	34	PC	Melbourne	14	B
Barbados	29	PC	Mexico City	25	B
Barcelona	16	S	Miami	29	B
Beijing	19	S	Milan	16	B
Beirut	28	S	Mombasa	33	PC
Belgrade	12	PC	Montreal	3	PC
Berlin	11	S	Moscow	13	S
Bermuda	23	PC	Mumbai	34	S
Bordeaux	22	S	Munich	8	DU
Brussels	15	PC	Nairobi	23	B
Bucharest	15	PC	Naples	15	PC
Budapest	8	B	New Orleans	21	DU
Buenos Aires	25	S	New York	9	B
Cairo	32	S	Nice	16	PC
Calcutta	36	S	Nicosia	21	S
Canberra	15	PC	Oslo	8	S
Cape Town	20	PC	Paris	16	PC
Chicago	16	S	Perth	21	B
Copenhagen	9	B	Prague	9	PC
Corfu	12	R	Reykjavik	9	R
Delhi	33	S	Riga	12	S
Dubai	30	S	Rio de Janeiro	24	SH
Dublin	11	B	Riyadh	30	S
Faro	21	S	Rome	16	PC
Florence	16	PC	San Francisco	16	B
Frankfurt	12	PC	Santiago	29	S
Geneva	13	PC	São Paulo	21	B
Gibraltar	18	S	Seoul	14	S
Helsinki	10	S	Seychelles	31	PC
Hong Kong	20	PC	Singapore	32	B
Honolulu	28	B	St Petersburg	11	S
Istanbul	13	PC	Stockholm	10	S
Jerusalem	33	S	Sydney	20	S
Johannesburg	23	S	Tel Aviv	33	S
Kuala Lumpur	31	PC	Tenerife	21	PC
Kyiv	**	**	Tokyo	14	PC
Lanzarote	25	PC	Vancouver	9	R
Las Palmas	22	PC	Venice	14	PC
Lima	25	B	Vienna	8	PC
Lisbon	24	S	Warsaw	13	B
Los Angeles	17	PC	Washington	11	DU
Luxor	36	S	Zurich	11	PC

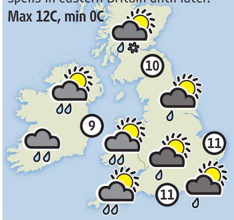
Five days ahead

Unsettled with blustery winds and outbreaks of rain, turning wintry in Scotland at times

Tomorrow

Sunny spells and a few showers in northern Britain. Showers will turn to longer spells of rain in Ireland and western Britain. Mainly dry with sunny spells in eastern Britain until later.

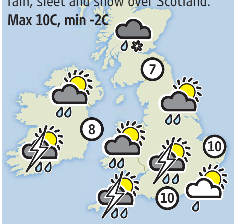
Max 12C, min 0C



Wednesday

Sunny spells and risk of a few showers in England, Wales and Ireland, perhaps turning heavy and thundery in western areas. Rather cloudy with outbreaks of rain, sleet and snow over Scotland.

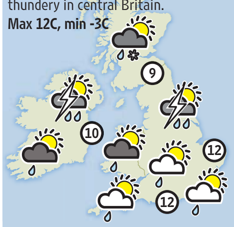
Max 10C, min -2C



Thursday

Mainly cloudy with showery rain and snow in Scotland, heavy at times. Sunny spells and a scattering of showers elsewhere, perhaps heavy and thundery in central Britain.

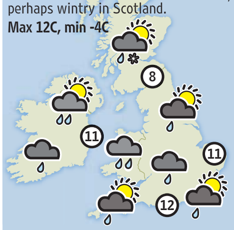
Max 12C, min -3C



Friday

Rather cloudy with showery rain spreading eastwards over Ireland, Wales and southern England. Sunshine and a few showers in northern Britain, perhaps wintry in Scotland.

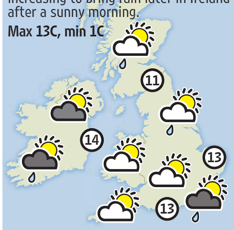
Max 12C, min -4C



Saturday

Mainly dry with sunny spells across Britain, but the risk of a few showers in eastern England and Scotland. Cloud increasing to bring rain later in Ireland after a sunny morning.

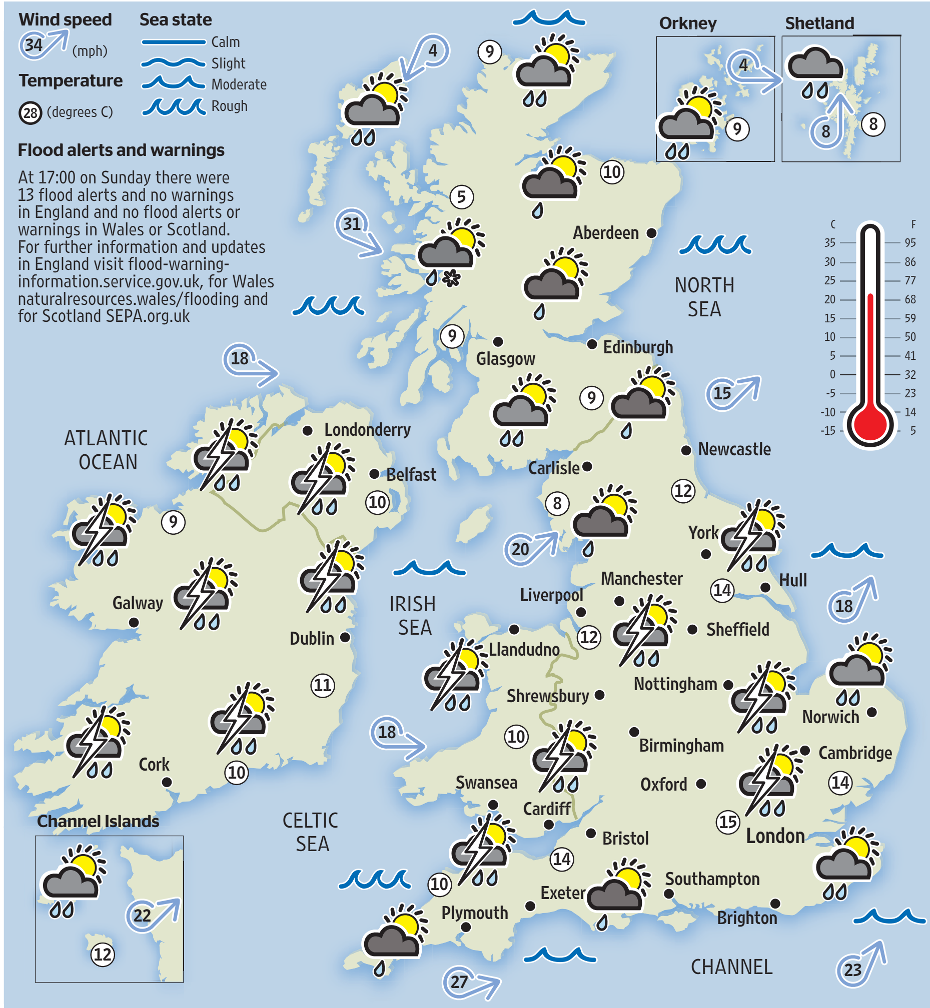
Max 13C, min 1C



The Times weather page is provided by Weatherquest

Flood alerts and warnings

At 17:00 on Sunday there were 13 flood alerts and no warnings in England and no flood alerts or warnings in Wales or Scotland. For further information and updates in England visit flood-warning-information.service.gov.uk, for Wales naturalresources.wales/flooding and for Scotland SEPA.org.uk



General situation: Cloud and rain clearing eastern areas followed by sunny spells and a scattering of heavy and thundery showers.
SW Eng, Wales, Lake District, Borders, Edinburgh and Dundee, Aberdeen, IoM, Glasgow, SW Scotland: Some dry and sunny spells but a scattering of blustery showers will spread eastwards, heavy and thundery at times. Moderate to fresh southwesterly wind. Maximum 14C (57F), minimum 1C (34F).

E Anglia, London, SE Eng: Cloudy with outbreaks of rain in the morning, turning sunny with heavy and thundery showers in the afternoon. Moderate to strong southwesterly wind. Maximum 15C (59F), minimum 3C (37F).
Cen S Eng, E Eng, Midlands, NW Eng, Channel Is, Cen N Eng, NE Eng, N Isles: Cloud and rain clearing to bring sunny spells and showers, heavy and thundery at times. Moderate to fresh southwesterly wind. Maximum 15C (59F), minimum 1C (34F).

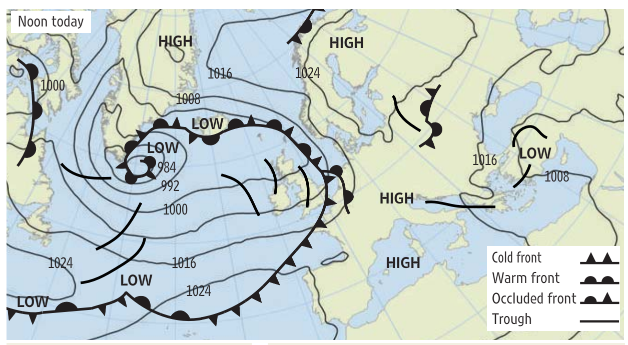
Cen Highland, Moray Firth, Argyll, NE Scotland, NW Scotland: Rather cloudy with showery rain, wintry over high ground. Light increasing to moderate westerly wind. Maximum 10C (50F), minimum -3C (27F).
Republic of Ireland, N Ireland: Sunny spells and a scattering of blustery showers, turning heavy and thundery at times, especially in the afternoon. Moderate to fresh southwesterly wind, veering westerly. Maximum 11C (52F), minimum 0C (32F).

Tides

Tidal predictions.
Heights in metres

Today		Ht		Ht
Aberdeen	04:35	4.0	16:56	4.0
Avonmouth	10:37	12.5	22:53	12.2
Belfast	02:05	3.3	14:37	3.4
Cardiff	10:22	11.7	22:36	11.5
Devonport	09:12	5.1	21:23	5.1
Dover	01:59	6.7	14:16	6.5
Dublin	01:22	5.4	13:41	5.3
Falmouth	08:15	4.8	20:26	4.8
Greenock	03:43	3.3	16:00	3.5
Harwich	02:50	3.9	15:15	3.8
Holyhead	01:25	5.4	13:44	5.3
Hull	09:40	7.0	22:00	7.0
Leith	05:58	5.2	18:18	5.2
Liverpool	02:12	8.9	14:28	8.8
London Bridge	05:07	7.0	17:25	6.6
Lowestoft	--:--	--	12:59	2.3
Milford Haven	09:33	6.6	21:51	6.5
Morecambe	02:23	9.0	14:39	8.9
Newhaven	02:09	6.5	14:28	6.4
Newquay	08:25	6.6	20:44	6.4
Oban	08:49	3.7	21:11	3.6
Penzance	07:55	5.2	20:15	5.2
Portsmouth	02:33	4.5	14:54	4.5
Shoreham	02:15	6.1	14:34	6.0
Southampton	01:50	4.5	14:31	4.1
Swansea	09:37	9.0	21:53	8.8
Tees	06:56	5.2	19:13	5.2
Weymouth	09:53	1.9	22:10	1.9

Noon today



Synoptic situation

Low pressure centred near Iceland will push a set of fronts across eastern Britain in the morning with a set of troughs following in behind leading to sunny spells and a scattering of showers spreading across the British Isles, after thick cloud and spells of rain have cleared during the morning. The low pressure in the Atlantic will bring rain later on tomorrow.

Highs and lows

24hrs to 5pm yesterday

Warmest: St James Park, Greater London, 16.8C
Coldest: Altnaharra, -0.7C
Wettest: Thomastown, Co Fermanagh, 1.8mm
Sunniest: Camborne, 8.8hrs*

Sun and moon

For Greenwich
Sun rises: 06.15
Sun sets: 19.47
Moon rises: 00.19
Moon sets: 07.54
Third quarter: April 13

Hours of darkness

Aberdeen	20:36-05:40
Belfast	20:46-06:01
Birmingham	20:26-05:49
Cardiff	20:30-05:55
Exeter	20:30-05:58
Glasgow	20:42-05:52
Liverpool	20:32-05:51
London	20:17-05:43
Manchester	20:29-05:48
Newcastle	20:29-05:43
Norwich	20:13-05:36
Penzance	20:37-06:07
Sheffield	20:26-05:45

Weather Eye

Paul Simons



Today looks like being the wettest day of the Easter holiday over much of the UK, with some spells of rain in the morning followed by blustery showers, although broken by sunny intervals.

But then Easter Monday is often jinxed by bad weather, particularly bitter cold and even snow. Only two years ago, on Monday, April 5 much of southern Britain woke up to flurries of falling snow after what had been a largely warm holiday. An outbreak of cold Arctic wind had sent temperatures tumbling, but the snow did not last long before the sun melted it away, although the day still remained chilly.

In 1883, Easter Monday on March 26 ended with snow and hail in a bitter northerly wind with temperatures struggling to stay above freezing, although it has to be said that the temperatures kept running.

It is striking how many cold and snowy Easters tend to occur when Easter falls in late March, rather than in April when the weather is generally warmer. One exception was in April 1908, when the entire Easter holiday was plagued by snow; on Monday, April 20 that year, a sudden and heavy snowstorm dropped four inches of snow — although that did nothing to put off the great cricketer WG Grace from playing his final three-day game that Easter. Despite the inclement weather, Grace took the field for the Gentlemen of England against Surrey and scored 15 and 25.

Apart from snow and cold, one of the worst horrors to strike an Easter Monday was on March 28, 2016, when Storm Katie swept in. Southern Britain was battered with winds gusting up to 106mph, tearing off roofs, including from a block of flats in Wimbledon. Flights were cancelled, trains delayed, trees toppled and 100,000 homes left without power in the southeast. To add to the misery, the storm also brought heavy rains.

All of which adds to the argument that Easter should be made a fixed date in mid or late April, when there is a greater chance of some decent weather.

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TUDOR
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BLACK BAY CHRONO

Sport

Van der Poel wins battle of uneasy riders



SHUTTERSTOCK

Van der Poel, left and below, was pushed by Van Aert until his rival in yellow had a puncture. Behind, Degenkolb crashes

Cycling
Sean Russell

Mont Ventoux, Alpe d'Huez, and Passo dello Stelvio are all feared names in cycling, but perhaps there is none as frightening to a rider as Trouée d'Arenberg, the cobbled sector of Paris–Roubaix that puts the "hell" in the "Hell of the North". But why race over these boneshaking stones? Perhaps we should turn to *Dante's Inferno* for an answer: "They yearn for what they fear."

Under the shade of the trees, a tyre, rattled by the cobbles, explodes off the rim of Derek Gee (Israel Premier Tech) from the early breakaway. Behind, in the peloton, riders fall and lay in the mud by the side of the road, a twist of fallen bikes and limbs, a great cloud of brown dust rising. Meanwhile, Wout van Aert (Jumbo-Visma) and a small group including his rival Mathieu van der Poel (Alpecin-Deceuninck) power ahead of the chaos.

The early stages were quiet and fast, as is becoming the norm in men's World Tour racing. None of the top teams were willing to let a breakaway go up the road. It wasn't until 85km into the 256km race that a small break would finally make it, but they would never be ahead by more than two minutes.

The cobbles were finally dry after days of rain, but slippery wet patches remained. The riders tried to stay on the crown of the cobbles, down the centre, where they were smoothest and driest but some were forced on to the sides, where the stones were wet and crashes inevitable. Peter Sagan (TotalEnergies) was an early casualty of the race as the Slovakian tumbled to the side of the road on his hands and knees in the muddy grass while the riders behind carried their bikes on their shoulders around and over the banks and back on to the road.

This is the last we'll see at Roubaix of the once-dominant 2018 winner, who leaves road racing at the end of the season. At the other end of his career is Josh Tarling, the 19-year-old from Wales, who lined up for Ineos Grenadiers as the youngest male rider at Paris–Roubaix since 1937. Unfortunately, after some strong early work chasing down breakaways in service to Filippo Ganna, he clashed with his team-mate, Luke Rowe, bringing them both down as they turned a corner.

It was just before the Arenberg Trench with 102km remaining that the race began in earnest, as Van Aert laid down the power to surge clear of all but three riders. These included Van der Poel, who stuck to his wheel.

A small group consisting of Ineos's Ganna, Groupama–FDJ's Stefan Küng, Van der Poel's team-mate Jasper Philipsen, Trek–Segafredo's Mads Pedersen and John Degenkolb, of DSM, managed to close the gap to Van Aert and Van der Poel and this group would never see the peloton again.

For the next 80km, Van der Poel made multiple moves. He attacked on the cobbles, riding on the sides of the road, up the mud banks forcing the spectators to step back, and then he'd jolt back on to the stones, seeking the fastest line, the smoothest way across. But every time, Van Aert was there on his wheel — never attacking, always conserving his energy. Van der Poel went hard again on a stretch of tarmac which rose slightly, out of the saddle, on the drops, bike swaying, and then he looked around, only to see the yellow of Van Aert once more.

How they finished

Paris-Roubaix
(Compiegne-Roubaix, 256.6 km)
1, M van der Poel (Neth, Alpecin-Deceuninck) 5hr 28min 41sec; 2, J Philipsen (Bel, Alpecin-Deceuninck) at 46sec; 3, W Van Aert (Bel, Jumbo-Visma) same time; 4, M Pedersen (Den, Trek-Segafredo) at 50sec; 5, S Kung (Switz, Groupama-FDJ) same time.

It began to seem as if this would be the pattern all the way to the finish. But with 18km to go, Van der Poel looked to attack again, dashing for a gap between his team-mate Philipsen and Degenkolb. But as he powered through, Philipsen veered right and knocked the Dutchman into the DSM man, who fell to the ground. A master of the cobbles who has a section named after him, Degenkolb would never rejoin the leaders.

Van Aert was set free by the incident and attacked Van der Poel quickly, but soon the Dutchman was back on his wheel. Something was wrong. Van Aert's head hung down looking at his bike; he had a puncture. Van Aert pulled to the side of the road and stopped for a new wheel while Van der Poel rode off. The Belgian had looked the strongest, he had played the game well all day and seemed to have the measure of Van der Poel. But it wasn't to be.



Van der Poel, head down, mouth open, rode hard to the end. At one point he almost crashed into the barriers, so hard was he pushing. Twenty-five seconds behind, Van Aert gave everything he had but the group would not work with him. Every attack was covered by Van der Poel's team-mate Philipsen, and soon it was over. Van der Poel took the fastest ever edition of Paris–Roubaix, his fourth monument win.

Roubaix showed once more why it is the "Queen of the Classics", even if Van Aert was struck by fate. As Van der Poel said: "You have to have good luck and good legs [to win Roubaix] and I had both."

So did Alison Jackson of EF Education-TIBCO-SVB the day before. She was part of an 18-rider group that broke free after only 20km and she managed to go all the way to the end of the 145km course, arriving with seven of the original group, to become the first Canadian rider to win Roubaix. Britain's Pfeiffer Georgi (DSM) was eighth behind Lotte Kopecky (SD Worx) who won the Tour of Flanders a week ago.



Sport Racing

Chepstow
Rob Wright

1.25 Mount Tempest **3.45** Ingenio
2.00 Much Too Dear **4.18** Sainte Doctor
2.35 Stormy Flight **4.55** Two To Tango
3.10 Eclair D'Ainay **5.35** High Treason
Going: good, good to soft in places
Sky Sports Racing

1.25 Novices' Hurdle (£4,520: 2m) (9)
1 61501 MOUNT TEMPEST 19 (D) D Skelton 6-12-0 H Skelton
2 -6143 CLONAKILTY 71 (D) O Murphy 6-11-9 L Stones (5)
3 -0006 ABBEYHILL 16 (T) N Mulholland 6-11-2 S Twiston-Davies
4 640 DIAMOND TWIN 19 D Skelton 5-11-2 F Gillard (3)
5 FF0P GOOD FRIDAY FAIRY 9 Ben Clarke 6-11-2 B R Jones
6 1/54 MANORBANK 34 (D) E Lavelle 8-11-2 J A Anderson (7)
7 TRY THE MONEY Henry Oliver 5-11-2 N Schofield
8 000 TWP STORI 44 S Drinkwater 5-11-2 A Johns
9 00P DOLLY BIRD 28 (T) Chris Honour 5-10-9 J Quinlan
1-2 Mount Tempest, 9-4 Clonakilty, 12-1 Try The Money, 16-1 Manorbank, 33-1 Diamond Twin, 66-1 Good Friday Fairy, Abbeyhill, 100-1 others.

2.00 Maiden Hurdle (£4,520: 3m) (8)
1 0P CALL ME RAFA 54 (P) T R George 6-11-8 Sean Houlihan
2 -0322 GREAT NAME THAT 22 (T) H Fry 6-11-8 N Schofield
3 -2053 MUCH TOO DEAR 33 L Horsfall 5-11-8 D Bass
4 2-04 NOT LONG LEFT 36 (T) Christian Williams 6-11-8 J Tudor
5 F333 SHOT TOWER 32 (T) Joe Ponting 7-11-8 S Twiston-Davies
6 -5554 STATE OF FAME 16 T Vaughan 7-11-8 A Johns
7 F1-3P STATE OF POWER 66 (T) P Nicholls 6-11-8 H Cobden
8 -4325 LAGONDA 16 V Williams 8-11-1 Shane Quinlan (3)
7-4 Lagonda, 5-2 Great Name That, 4-1 State Of Power, 8-1 State Of Fame, 10-1 Much Too Dear, 16-1 Not Long Left, 33-1 Shot Tower, Call Me Rafa.

2.35 Handicap Chase (£6,337: 3m) (9)
1 -1234 RAMSES DE TEILLEE 22 (T,BF,CD) D Pipe 12-12-7 J Tudor
2 4P05P SPORTING JOHN 26 (B) P Hobbs & J White 8-11-10A Coleman
3 U-3P6 ASK ME EARLY 23 (T,CD) H Fry 9-11-9 S Bowen
4 13-3P NESTOR PARK 86 (P) B Pauling 10-11-8 Luca Morgan
5 -1PP3 TALLOW FOR COAL 34 (B,D) J Snowden 7-11-2 H Cobden
6 1325P FORGOT TO ASK 131 (P,T,D) T R George 11-11-1Sean Houlihan
7 P3-3P GRAND MOGUL 86 Miss G Haywood 9-11-0B Ffrench-Davis (7)
8 04212 STORMY FLIGHT 32 (P,BF) J Scott 9-11-0 L Williams
9 4UP32 BALLINSKER 66 (P,C) E Williams 8-10-3 Isabel Williams (3)
11-4 Ramses De Teillee, 9-2 Ask Me Early, 6-1 Stormy Flight, Nestor Park, 7-1 Sporting John, 8-1 Ballinsker, 10-1 Tallow For Coal, 12-1 others.

3.10 Handicap Chase (£13,202: 2m) (5)
1 311/P ANGELS BREATH 86 S Thomas 9-12-0 S Twiston-Davies
2 2-361 ECLAIR D'AINAY 12 (P,T,CD) D Skelton 9-11-8 H Skelton
3 -0533 FRIEND OR FOE 44 (P,D) P Nicholls 8-11-1 F Gingell (7)
4 P3114 NOT AVAILABLE 16 (T,V,CD) M Sheppard 8-10-7 S Bowen
5 0-6F2 EARTH COMPANY 91 P Hobbs & J White 7-10-6 Sean Houlihan
5-2 Angels Breath, 11-4 Eclair D'Ainay, 4-1 Not Available, 9-2 Friend Or Foe, 5-1 Earth Company.

3.45 Handicap Hurdle (£4,330: 2m 3f 100yd) (13)
1 23-FP ATHOLL STREET 23 Alexandra Dunn 8-12-2 N Schofield
2 /1-4P RUNSWICK BAY 105 E Lavelle 8-11-12 J A Anderson (7)
3 1263 GWENNIE MAY BOY 34 Jonjo O'Neill 5-11-8 K Brogan
4 25233 HIGH GAME ROYAL 28 (BF) P Hobbs & J White 6-11-7 B R Jones
5 -3035 KINGOFTHEWEST 19 (B,T,D) D Pipe 7-11-7 J Tudor
6 FU32P FIRST QUEST 105 (P,T) Miss S West 9-11-6 F Gillard (3)
7 P3415 LIFETIME LEGEND 33 (H,D) N King 5-11-5 J Quinlan
8 -6452 BERTIE WOOSTER 39 Joe Tizzard 5-11-2 H Kimber (3)
9 5002U HUNTERS SONG 104 G Brown 7-11-1 Isabelle Ryder (10)
10 000P2 WINDS OF FIRE 43 (V) E Williams 8-10-12 A Wedge
11 04022 INGENNIO 28 (T) R Hobson 5-10-12 S Bowen
12 4-323 DRASH ON RUBY 36 (T,BF) J Scott 7-10-9 L Williams
13 -0104 GEROLAMO CARDANO 23 D J Jeffreys 7-10-7 M Kendrick
5-1 Bertie Wooster, 11-2 High Game Royal, 6-1 Drash On Ruby, 7-1 Ingennio, 8-1 Kingofthewest, 10-1 Gwennie May Boy, Winds Of Fire, 12-1 Lifetime Legend, Gerolamo Cardano.

4.18 Handicap Chase (£4,859: 2m 3f) (7)
1 F-34P COUPDEBOL 100 (T) T R George 8-12-0 A Coleman
2 -5U56 COURTLAND 23 P Bowen 8-12-0 S Bowen
3 6P042 SAINTE DOCTOR 24 (T,BF) N Mulholland 7-11-12 K Brogan
4 442P5 COKYTHO 23 (T) O Sherwood 5-11-10 Sean Houlihan
5 4-322 BALLYBEEN 23 (T) S Thomas 7-11-9 S Twiston-Davies
6 1PPP2 THE KNOT IS TIED 13 (B) N King 8-11-1 J Quinlan
7 30253 JUDEX LEFOU 54 (T,D) T Vaughan 8-10-8 A Johns
11-4 Sainte Doctor, 3-1 Ballybeen, 9-2 Coupdebol, 5-1 Judex Lefou, 7-1 Courtland, 10-1 The Knot Is Tied, 14-1 Cokytho.

4.55 NH Flat Race (£2,614: 2m) (9)
1 13 ISAAC DES OBEAUX 104 (BF,CD) P Nicholls 5-11-9 H Cobden
2 5 DON'T TELL SU 100 (BF) P Nicholls 5-11-2 F Gingell (7)
3 46 JEMURA 29 N Henderson 5-11-2 S Bowen
4 44-1 LAW OF SUPPLY 162 K Bailey 5-11-2 D Bass
5 3 TWO TO TANGO 43 E Lavelle 5-11-2 J A Anderson (7)
6 4 VINCENZO 167 S Thomas 5-11-2 S Twiston-Davies
7 1 YES DAY 134 Jonjo O'Neill 5-11-2 K Brogan
8 HOLY LEGEND Alexandra Dunn 4-10-8 N Schofield
9 2 HOUR STAR 45 (BF) Joe Tizzard 4-10-8 J Tudor
3-1 Isaac Des Obeaux, 7-2 Two To Tango, 4-1 Don't Tell Su, 7-1 Vincenzo, 8-1 Law Of Supply, 10-1 Hour Star, 12-1 Yes Day, 14-1 Jemura, 25-1 Holy Legend.

5.35 NH Flat Race (£2,614: 2m) (9)
1 41 INOUI MACHIN 47 N Mulholland 5-11-9 J A Anderson (7)
2 14 DIVILSKIN 139 (W,BF) P Nicholls 5-11-2 H Cobden
3 F DUC DU RENE 66 E Williams 5-11-2 A Wedge
4 53 PIC ROC 32 B Pauling 5-11-2 Luca Morgan
5 PRESENTING MARVIN F O'Brien 5-11-2 P Brennan
6 DOLLY DELIGHTFUL (W) P Hobbs & J White 5-10-9Sean Houlihan
7 5 LOVE BITE 57 N Henderson 5-10-9 S Bowen
8 2 HIGH TREASON 36 N Twiston-Davies 4-10-8S Twiston-Davies
9 U CANT BE SERIOUS Joe Tizzard 4-10-8 F Gingell (7)
7-2 High Treason, 4-1 Duc Du Rene, 5-1 Inoui Machin, 6-1 Pic Roc, 8-1 U others.

Fakenham
Rob Wright

1.57 Havaila **4.17** Fidux
2.32 Sir Apollo **4.52** Janika
3.07 East End Girl (nap) **5.27** Young At Heart
3.42 Small Bad Bob
Going: good
Racing TV

1.57 Maiden Hurdle (4-Y-O: £4,629: 2m 4f) (3)
1 20623 HAVAILA 8 M Harris 11-2 M Bastyan
2 30040 HIGHLAND FROLIC 17 (T,V) M Harris 11-2 R T Dunne
3 05 OVERSTATE 24 (P) S Edmunds 11-2 Ciaran Gethings
1-3 Havaila, 7-2 Highland Frolic, 10-1 Overstate.

2.32 Handicap Chase (£5,281: 2m 5f) (5)
1 6F3PP FANCY FOUNDATIONS 103 (P) L Morgan 9-12-0P Cowley (3)
2 422-0 SOPRAN THOR 93 G L Moore 8-11-10 T Cannon
3 441P2 SIR APOLLO 18 (B,T) S England 8-10-2 J England
4 -3226 ENDURING LOVE 26 (B,T,BF,D) O Murphy 11-10-2D Davis (7)
5 F346P AN MARCACH 67 (B) Dr R Newland 9-10-2 Doubtful
13-8 Sir Apollo, 2-1 Sopran Thor, 4-1 Enduring Love, 5-1 Fancy Foundations.

3.07 Handicap Hurdle (£4,225: 2m) (9)
1 41502 EAST END GIRL 20 (D) L Wadham 6-12-0 E Edge (10)
2 -6105 EVENTFUL 56 (B,D) J & S Best 6-11-7 T Cannon
3 30P01 COASTAL SUN 131 (T,D) J Snowden 5-11-4 A P Heskin
4 41524 SAWPIT SIENNA 15 (P,T,BF,C,D) S Drinkwater 8-11-4R T Dunne
5 P0655 RHYME SCHEME 24 (T) P Winks 6-11-3 J Kington
6 26012 GLANCE AT ME 35 (D) Andrew Martin 5-10-11 J Martin (7)
7 0-0P3 RUBY'S PEARL 35 (T) Mrs E Bishop 6-10-11 H Beswick (3)
8 05003 KENAHOPE 17 (P) O Murphy 5-10-8 W T Kennedy
9 44022 LUNA DORA 164 (T) T Symonds 6-10-4 B Poste
3-1 Luna Dora, 4-1 East End Girl, 9-2 Sawpit Sienna, 11-2 Glance At Me, 6-1 Coastal Sun, 10-1 Kenahope, Eventful, 20-1 Ruby's Pearl, 33-1 Rhyme Scheme.

3.42 Handicap Hurdle (£7,922: 2m 4f) (7)
1 1P102 THIRTYFOURSTITCHES 14 (CD) Dr R Newland 8-12-2C Hammond
2 21P52 MADE FOR YOU 20 (B,T,D) O Murphy 8-12-2 Daire Davis (7)
3 P-040 MASTER DEBONAIR 34 (T) Christian Williams 9-12-1E Collier (7)
4 53252 SWAFFHAM BULBECK 24 (C) S Edmunds 9-12-0 C Gethings
5 P/2-P BOMBYX 28 L Wadham 8-11-9 T Cannon
6 P5355 SMALL BAD BOB 44 P Henderson 8-11-1 A Anderson (5)
7 1342P CLEARANCE F57 M Blake 9-10-11 Doubtful
9-4 Made For You, 3-1 Swaffham Bulbeck, 4-1 Thirtyfourstitches, 13-2 Small Bad Bob, Bombyx, 8-1 Master Debonair.

4.17 Handicap Chase (£16,338: 3m) (4)
1 -0016 SENIOR CITIZEN 57 (P,C,D) A King 10-11-8 A P Heskin
2 P4111 CYCLOP 16 (P,T,D) David Dennis 12-11-7 N Fox (7)
3 5-012 BOLDMERE 16 (BF,D) A Hales 10-11-6 H Bannister
4 -0502 FIDUX 47 A King 10-11-2 T Cannon
2-1 Cyclop, 9-4 Boldmere, 3-1 Fidux, 4-1 Senior Citizen.

4.52 Hunters' Chase (£3,593: 3m) (6)
1 -2011 FIRAK 11 (T) N A Pearce 8-12-2 Mr Sean O'Connor (7)
2 -P4B1 REBEL DAWN RISING 15 (T) K Kemp 9-12-0 Mr A Chadwick (5)
3 21112 TWILIGHT GIRL 23 (BF) James Owen 10-11-13 Mr Jamie Gambin (7)
4 -P152 CASTLE TRUMP 28 Rob Cundy 9-11-12Mr Charles Buckle (7)
5 0-PPP DICKIE DIVER 23 (P,T) John Whyte 10-11-12 Mr Rupert Wilks (7)
6 -4P42 JANIKA 15 (T) E Turner 10-11-12 Mr R Stearn (7)
13-8 Firak, 7-2 Rebel Dawn Rising, 4-1 Janika, 5-1 Twilight Girl, 10-1 Castle Trump, 12-1 Dickie Diver.

5.27 NH Flat Race (£3,268: 2m) (12)
1 FLOATING LINE O Murphy 5-11-2 F Gregory
2 04 LADY CARO 45 E Lavelle 5-11-2 R Patrick
3 LADY PLUMTON L Allan 5-11-2 R T Dunne
4 MISTRAL BLUE F O'Brien 5-11-2 C Brace
5 13 OMAHA WISH 45 D Skelton 5-11-2 Bridget Andrews
6 52 SCARLET O'TARA 17 Dr R Newland 5-11-2 C Hammond
7 SHOLOKHOV COCKTAIL (W) J Snowden 5-11-2 A P Heskin
8 6 SOLID AS A ROCK 59 J & S Best 6-11-2 H Bannister
9 0 BIRDHOUSE 51 S Edmunds 4-10-8 Ciaran Gethings
10 4 MISTRAL MILLY 51 A King 4-10-8 T Cannon
11 STAR FOR A DAY (H) S Hodgson 4-10-8 M Bastyan
12 YOUNG AT HEART L Wadham 4-10-8 E Edge (10)
10-3 Mistral Milly, 4-1 Omaha Wish, 11-2 Scarlet O'tara, 15-2 Young At Heart, 10-1 Sholokhov Cocktail, Mistral Blue, Birdhouse, Floating Line.

Huntingdon
Rob Wright

1.05 Norley (nb) **3.20** Patient Dream
1.35 Brentford Hope **3.55** Head And Heart
2.10 Lord Sparky **4.27** Kamsinas
2.45 Eyed
Going: good **Racing TV**

1.05 Handicap Chase (£5,809: 2m 4f) (5)
1 10241 MANINSANE 21 (P,T,CD) C Longsdon 8-12-10 Lilly Pinchin (3)
2 15-64 CHARLES RITZ 18 (BF) T R George 7-11-13 J J Burke
3 05121 GREAT HEART'JAC 41 F O'Brien 8-11-10 J Hogan (5)
4 40112 CARTONNE 18 (T,D) D McCain 6-11-5 T Gillard
5 21331 NORLEY 7 (T) B Pauling 8-11-1 Beau Morgan (7)
13-8 Norley, 7-2 Great Heart'Jac, 4-1 Maninsane, 9-2 Cartonne, 7-1 Charles Ritz.

1.35 Novices' Hurdle (£4,520: 2m) (8)
1 2221 BRENTFORD HOPE 14 (T) Harry Derham 6-11-12 P O'Brien
2 11-21 IMPOSE TOI 31 (D) N Henderson 5-11-12 N De Boinville
3 0P ALRIGHT CHAP 13 R Phillips 6-11-5 F Lambert (5)
4 13 ANGEL'S DREAM 16 G L Moore 5-11-5 N F Houlihan (3)
5 ELMEJOR F65 K Jewell 7-11-5 T Buckley (3)
6 0P ONNAROLL 143 (H) Cynthia Woods 5-11-5 J Best
7 1 VE DAY 40 (D) D McCain 4-11-4 B Hughes
8 03 JOHN THE BAPTIST 18 (H,T) F O'Brien 4-10-11 L Harrison (3)
11-8 Impose Toi, 11-4 Brentford Hope, 4-1 Ve Day, 6-1 Angel's Dream, 10-1 John The Baptist, 33-1 Elmejor, 100-1 Alright Chap, 200-1 Onnaroll.

2.10 Handicap Chase (£5,809: 3m) (5)
1 6P021 LUCKOFTHEDRAW 26 (C) T Bulgin 10-11-10 J Nailor
2 F-625 KAKAMORA 101 (P,T) T R George 8-11-9 J J Burke
3 /0P-P FINE THEATRE 23 (B,T) R Phillips 13-11-6 F Lambert (5)
4 13612 LORD SPARKY 35 (T,V,CD) S Edmunds 9-11-6 B Hughes
5 1432F DAN'S CHOSEN 39 (D) P Hobbs & J White 8-11-2J Martin (7)
15-8 Luckofthedraw, 9-4 Lord Sparky, 11-4 Dan's Chosen, 5-1 Kakamora, 33-1 Fine Theatre.

2.45 Handicap Hurdle (£5,017: 2m 5f) (9)
1 36310 TOMMY CULLEN 90 C Longsdon 5-12-2 Paul O'Brien
2 -P36P ROCK ON COWBOY 72 (P) B Pauling 6-12-1 K Woods
3 2-12 HALLIGATOR 35 (T) K Bailey 6-11-11 J J Burke
4 P-0P1 EYED 13 (T,C) P Webber 6-11-9 Jonjo O'Neill Jr
5 0-266 SWAPPED 98 (W) N Henderson 6-11-8 N De Boinville
6 0P12P ISSAR D'AIRY 33 (BF) G L Moore 5-11-7 N F Houlihan (3)
7 56052 TITANIUM BULLET 46 (T) W Greatrex 5-11-5 Dylan Kitts (7)
8 /PP2P PRESENTING BELLE 21 (P,T) L Wadham 6-11-3 T Gillard
9 32430 TREEFINCH 125 S Edmunds 5-11-0 B Hughes
7-2 Titanium Bullet, 4-1 Halligator, 9-2 Eyed, 5-1 Swapped, 8-1 Rock On Cowboy, Tommy Cullen, 10-1 Issar D'Airy, 14-1 others.

3.20 Handicap Hurdle (£5,017: 2m) (6)
1 64321 TENFOLD 13 (CD) G L Moore 6-12-2 Rob Hargreaves (10)
2 24566 COOLNAUGH HAZE 105 (CD) P Hobbs & J White 5-12-0 Elizabeth Gale (10)
3 3-143 GILBERTINA 38 N Kent 6-11-11 L Dobb (7)
4 25011 PATIENT DREAM 47 (P,D) D McCain 5-11-8 W Maggs (10)
5 -6045 PLAYTOGETAWAY 73 Jonjo O'Neill 5-11-6 Jonjo O'Neill Jr
6 32465 ASA 23 P Kirby 4-10-3 Thomas Dowson
7-4 Patient Dream, 3-1 Tenfold, 9-2 Gilbertina, 11-2 Playtogetaway, 8-1 Coolnaugh Haze, 12-1 Asa.

3.55 Handicap Chase (£4,225: 3m) (6)
1 63-05 HEAD AND HEART 15 P Hobbs & J White 6-12-0 Elizabeth Gale (10)
2 42211 BRANDISOVA 24 (D) L Wadham 7-11-13 B Hughes
3 1P0P/ SEI BELLA 770 M McGrath 9-11-12 N F Houlihan (3)
4 00366 METHODTOTHEMAGIC 13 R Phillips 8-11-7 F Lambert (5)
5 66B11 LEGENDARY RHYTHM 14 (P) T Symonds 7-11-1 J Nailor
6 6143P CATLIN 23 (BF) N Kent 8-10-7 C Todd
11-8 Brandisova, 13-8 Legendary Rhythm, 13-2 Catlin, 8-1 Head And Heart, 20-1 Methodtothemagic, 33-1 Sei Bella.

4.27 NH Flat Race (£2,178: 2m) (10)
1 1-B1 KAMSINAS 52 (D) F O'Brien 6-11-9 J Hogan (5)
2 3-3 BOB BOB RICARD 36 Jonjo O'Neill 5-11-2 Jonjo O'Neill Jr
3 20 BOMBAY SUNSET 72 (W) L Wadham 5-11-2 B Hughes
4 4 CAVE BLEU 37 J Mackie 5-11-2 P J Kavanagh (5)
5 02 CHAMPETRE 120 (P) H Whittington 5-11-2 A Doyle (5)
6 2 CROOKBARROW 43 Cynthia Woods 5-11-2 J Best
7 1- ROCK HOUSE 359 D Skelton 5-11-2 T Durrell (5)
8 FIERCE WARRIOR N Henderson 4-10-8 N De Boinville
9 JAPON DE CARJAC (W) P Webber 4-10-8 J J Burke
10 POTTERSJETAMAY C Longsdon 4-10-8 Lilly Pinchin (3)
11-4 Fierce Warrior, 7-2 Rock House, 4-1 Kamsinas, 6-1 Bob Bob Ricard, 13-2 Champetre, 12-1 Pottersjetamay, 20-1 Japon De Carjac, Bombay Sunset.

Plumpton
Rob Wright

2.23 Cape Vidal **4.43** Hilltown
2.58 Stepney Causeway **5.18** My Bad Lucy
3.33 Ez Tiger **5.53** Highway One O Five
4.08 Black Gerry
Going: good, good to soft in places on hurdle course **Sky Sports Racing**

2.23 Maiden Hurdle (£4,753: 2m 4f 114yd) (8)
1 046 BAR THYME 39 Seamus Mullins 5-11-6 M G Nolan
2 1300 CAPE VIDAL 58 (T) A Honeyball 6-11-6 B Godfrey (3)
3 -1345 COPSHILL LAD 51 (T) M Harris 5-11-6 H Reed
4 05-00 ENGAGING SAM 49 P Butler 6-11-6 C Quinn (5)
5 33003 GODOT 55 A Irvine 6-11-6 S Sheppard
6 -4F24 HONNEUR DE SIVOLA 20 C Hobson 6-11-6 B Roberts (7)
7 1-50 JET OF DREAMS 105 (T) W Greatrex 5-11-6 B J Powell
8 0-050 SCARPERED 77 N Henderson 6-11-6 G Sheehan
2-1 Cape Vidal, 9-4 Copshill Lad, 9-2 Scarpered, 5-1 Godot, 8-1 Jet Of Dreams, 25-1 Bar Thyme, 50-1 Honneur De Sivola, 100-1 Engaging Sam.

2.58 Handicap Chase (£12,146: 2m 1f) (9)
1 15-25 ICONIC MUDDLE 30 G L Moore 10-12-1 C Quinn (5)
2 23126 ROSE SEA HAS 54 Dr R Newland 8-11-12 L Scott (7)
3 43352 STEPNEY CAUSEWAY 38 (P,T) M Harris 6-11-12 H Reed
4 1132P ONLY MONEY 100 (CD) C Gordon 9-11-9 G Sheehan
5 11014 NOAHTHIRTYTWORED 171 (T) A West 7-11-8 L Edwards
6 30P50 TEXARD 14 (P,T) D Pipe 8-11-3 D Noonan
7 521P4 GLAJOU 21 (P,T,D) N Mulholland 7-11-2 R Mania
8 -2PP3 ALTO ALTO 50 (BF) C Gordon 6-10-12 Bryony Frost
9 3-633 NOT ANOTHER MUDDLE 26 (BF,C) G L Moore 12-10-11 J Moore
4-1 Rose Sea Has, 9-2 Not Another Muddle, 5-1 Only Money, 6-1 Stepney Causeway, Alto Alto, 7-1 Iconic Muddle, 10-1 Glajou, 12-1 others.

3.33 Handicap Hurdle (£4,225: 2m 2f) (13)
1 FF0U5 MUTUAL RESPECT 31 (P,T) Billy Aprahamian 7-12-0 Sean O'Briain (7)
2 0600 DOWNSMAN 20 (P,BF) J Boyle 5-11-13 James Davies
3 266 EMBOLDEN 125 C Hobson 6-11-9 B Roberts (7)
4 2-045 OHNODONTTAKEMEHOME 71 (P) P G Murphy 6-11-8 G Sheehan
5 32P5/ BIG JIMBO F40 G L Moore 6-11-7 Jamie Moore
6 40P0P BIRDMAN BOB 34 A Irvine 6-11-5 C Quinn (5)
7 0-306 HUNTING BROOK 35 (T) E Lavelle 6-11-5 T Bellamy
8 1605P INVICTUS DE BRION 42 (D) C Gordon 5-11-4 Bryony Frost
9 20505 JUST ANOTHER ONE 28 (T,V) N Hawke 4-11-3 D Noonan
10 014U4 TOMMY DILLION 28 R Rowe 7-11-1 Tabitha Worsley (3)
11 3-665 CLONGOWES 33 (T) D Steele 9-11-1 D Sansom (3)
12 -0306 EZ TIGER 46 (T,BF) A Hales 6-11-1 B Carver
13 43PPP BOLBERRY DOWN 63 (W,P) K Jewell 7-10-11 B J Powell
3-1 Big Jimbo, 11-2 Hunting Brook, 6-1 Downsman, 7-1 Mutual Respect, Ohnodonttakemehome, 10-1 Ez Tiger, 12-1 Tommy Dillion, 14-1 lothers.

4.08 Handicap Chase (£26,015: 2m 4f) (7)
1 -3P2P WAR LORD 25 (T) Joe Tizzard 8-12-0 B J Powell
2 4-151 FLIC OU VOYOU 51 (P,D) P Nicholls 9-11-10 Bryony Frost
3 11PP1 BLACK GERRY 8 G L Moore 8-11-10(7ex) Jamie Moore
4 1-235 JEMIMA P 102 (D) E Lavelle 9-11-5 T Bellamy
5 14416 LORD BADDESLEY 37 (BF,CD) C Gordon 8-11-2 G Sheehan
6 66105 JACAMAR 23 (V,D) M Harris 8-11-1 H Reed
7 20P06 CAPTAIN TOM CAT 23 (D) Dr R Newland 8-10-13 L Scott (7)
9-4 Black Gerry, 5-2 Flic Ou Voyou, 5-1 Lord Baddesley, 6-1 War Lord, 8-1 Jemima P, 12-1 Jacamar, 16-1 Captain Tom Cat.

4.43 Handicap Hurdle (£4,225: 3m 1f) (8)
1 03P02 ONE FOR THE WALL 42 C Gordon 7-12-2 Jamie Moore
2 0000P KING OTIS 35 (T) Billy Aprahamian 7-11-5 Sean O'Briain (7)
3 00502 FLEMEN'S TIPPLE 20 A Irvine 6-11-4 C Quinn (5)
4 -3PP0 THE TIN MINER 42 (V,C,D) C Gordon 12-11-3 G Sheehan
5 P6404 HILLTOWN 42 Seamus Mullins 5-11-1 M G Nolan
6 4-3P4 IF KARL'S BERG DID 21 (H) M Harris 8-10-13 B Harris (7)
7 -0P00 DEAR RALPHY 44 (T) A Honeyball 7-10-10 B Godfrey (3)
8 -5050 RUBYS REWARD 36 (T) D Hamer 7-10-3 H Reed
9-4 One For The Wall, 4-1 Flemen's Tipple, Dear Ralphy, 6-1 Hilltown, 8-1 If Karl's Berg Did, 12-1 The Tin Miner, Rubys Reward, 20-1 King Otis.

5.18 Handicap Chase (£4,753: 3m 2f) (7)
1 42222 RIVER TYNE 15 (BF) N Gifford 8-12-0 B J Powell
2 5-P26 LAYERTHORPE 4 (P) D Hamer 11-11-7 T Bellamy
3 53614 MY BAD LUCY 38 N Gifford 7-11-7 James Davies
4 06432 DELGANY MONARCH 20 (BF) R Rowe 8-11-4 T Worsley (3)
5 12212 WHO IS THAT 28 C Gordon 7-10-12 G Sheehan
6 400P6 DANNYSTORY 43 Harriet Brown 6-10-2 B Godfrey (3)
7 P644P POUR UNE RAISON 64 (P) N Mitchell 8-10-2 P Armson (3)
2-1 River Tyne, 5-2 Who Is That, 3-1 Delgany Monarch, 5-1 My Bad Lucy, 16-1 Layerthorpe, 33-1 Dannystory, Pour Une Raison.

5.53 NH Flat Race (£4,383: 2m 2f) (9)
1 P1-3 CARRIGMOORNA ROWAN 147 (H,BF) H Fry 6-11-4B Carver
2 DONTASKCHRIS Mrs D Grissell 5-11-4 Tabitha Worsley (3)
3 53 FORLANO 59 J & S Best 6-11-4 Jamie Moore
4 3 IKALIMIX 50 (T) T Lacey 5-11-4 S Sheppard
5 0 RUBY'S COMET 159 (H,T) D Hamer 5-11-4 T Bellamy
6 5 COUNTRY LADY 110 P Nicholls 5-10-11 Bryony Frost
7 3 HIGHWAY ONE O FIVE 44 C Gordon 4-10-10 G Sheehan
8 0 MOUNTAIN BAY 71 Seamus Mullins 4-10-10 M G Nolan
9 WESTERN KNIGHT Joe Tizzard 4-10-10 B J Powell
2-1 Highway One O Five, 3-1 Carrigmoorna Rowan, 5-1 Country Lady, 6-1 Ikalimix, 7-1 Forlano, 8-1 Western Knight, 33-1 Dontaskchris, 66-1 others.

The following horses are blinkered for the first time today:
Chepstow 2.35 Tallow For Coal; 3.45 Kingofthewest. **Fairyhouse** 5.00 Milan Native.

Redcar
Rob Wright

1.44 Freedom Day **4.01** The Cookstown Cafu
2.16 Bonito Cavalo **4.36** Blind Beggar
2.51 Zegos Surprise **5.11** Edmund Ironside
3.26 Zephlyn **5.46** Smooth Red
Going: soft **Racing TV**
Draw: no advantage

1.44 Novice Stakes (£4,320: 1m) (11)
1 (4) 54- AULD TOON LOON 154 D O'Meara 4-10-2 Jason Watson
2 (3) 00- DARKER 247 R Carr 4-10-2 JP Sullivan
3 (6) 60 HEER HE GOES 17 H Graham & G Rutherford 6-10-2 J Garritty
4 (1) 323- MAHANAKHON 336 (BF) T Easterby 4-10-2 D Allan
5 (10) 06 ROMAN BLAZE 7 (H) J Bedi 4-10-2 Paula Muir (3)
6 (7) 21- THEME PARK 220 N Tinkler 3-9-8 R Scott
7 (11) 5 BROCKLESBY 24 M Dods 3-9-1 C Beasley
8 (8) 05- FINAL CHANT 178 M Hammond 3-9-1 A Brookes (5)
9 (9) 64 FREEDOM DAY 304 J & T Gosden 3-9-1 R Havlin
10 (2) 32 OLD SMOKE 26 R Fahey 3-9-1 Oisin Orr
11 (5) 00 PETITE SIOUX 27 Phillip Makin 3-8-10 S Gray
9-4 Theme Park, 3-1 Freedom Day, 7-2 Mahanakhon, 4-1 Old Smoke, 8-1 Auld Toon Loon, 20-1 Brocklesby, 33-1 Final Chant, 50-1 Darker.

2.16 Handicap (£3,481: 6f) (10)
1 (6) 40154 USTATH 4 (D) R Fell 7-9-11 J Peate (5)
2 (7) 43-50 SLAINTE MHATH 10 (D) K Scott 5-9-10 P Dennis
3 (2) 4034- BONITO CAVALO 182 J Goldie 4-9-8 P Mulrennan
4 (9) 0521- TWO SUMMERS 167 (H,D) A Keatley 4-9-6 C Murtagh
5 (8) 23513 KRAKEN FLORIDA 24 (P,D) J Wainwright 4-9-4 Z Wheatley (5)
6 (3) 4-001 HURT YOU NEVER 24 (D) Adrian Nicholls 4-9-4 Mia Nicholls (7)
7 (10) 05-00 HIGHLAND QUEEN 26 B Smart 4-9-2 Mark Winn (5)
8 (5) 05300 STRONSAY 26 (P,D) Liam Bailey 7-9-0 B Garrity
9 (4) 00-0 DANZART 46 (D) Mrs Stella Barclay 5-9-0 Dylan Hogan
10 (1) 0-000 RAKIN 41 (H,T) I W McInnes 4-9-0 P Mathers
3-1 Ustath, 7-2 Bonito Cavalo, 5-1 Two Summers, 6-1 Slainte Mhath, 7-1 Hurt You Never, 8-1 Kraken Florida, 14-1 Stronsay, 16-1 Highland Queen.

2.51 Handicap (£3,481: 6f) (9)
1 (5) 600-0 IMPRESSOR 17 (D) Phillip Makin 6-9-10 R Scott
2 (3) 0010- RAINBOW RAIN 257 (CD) T Waggott 4-9-10 T Eaves
3 (9) -0443 IRELAND'S EYE 27 (B,D) D Carroll 5-9-8 H Shaw
4 (4) -0050 RAJMEISTER 27 (P,T) R Menzies 5-9-4 C Bennett
5 (6) 500-0 GRAN ROQUE 6 R Fell 4-9-3 J Hart
6 (1) -0242 ZEGOS SURPRISE 24 I Jardine 5-9-2 A Mullen
7 (2) 3605- ONE LAST HUG 167 J Goldie 8-9-0 Mark Winn (5)
8 (8) 4-050 DANAH STAR 32 J Wainwright 4-9-0 D Costello
9 (7) 40-53 HARD SOLUTION 14 (CD) R Carr 7-9-0 JP Sullivan
7-2 Zegos Surprise, 5-1 Ireland's Eye, 6-1 Rainbow Rain, Hard Solution, 7-1 Impressor, 8-1 Rajmeister, One Last Hug, 10-1 Gran Roque, 12-1 Danah Star.

3.26 Handicap (£3,481: 2m) (13)
1 (11) 3-100 TIGER SPIRIT 38 (T,CD) M Herrington 6-9-9 T Eaves
2 (2) /040- VISITE OFFICIELLE J10 (P,T) M Hammond 5-9-9 A Brookes (5)
3 (4) 5/30- PARAMARIBO J31 (T,V) I Jardine 5-9-9 A Mullen
4 (3) 4031- ZUCKERBERG J13 (P,T,D) J Candlish 7-9-7 P J McDonald
5 (6) 2220- OH SO CHIC 125 (P) Sara Ender 6-9-4 Joanna Mason
6 (12) 1441/ CALEVADE J23 (P,D) B Haslam 7-9-2 P Mulrennan
7 (10) -4223 FREEWHEELIN 38 (D) T Tate 5-9-0 G Lee
8 (7) 0460- LA BELLE VIE 133 H Main 4-9-0 Jason Watson
9 (8) 00-52 ZEPHLYN 24 Ewan Whillans 4-8-12 J Hart
10 (1) 005-0 GOLD RING 24 N Mechie 6-8-11 A Breslin (3)
11 (13) 2530- CLOUDY ROSE 167 J Berry 5-8-9 F McManoman
12 (5) 450/0 SOCKS OFF 6 (P) R Menzies 6-8-9 Paula Muir (3)
13 (9) 4006- TARBAT NESS 167 (P) J Berry 4-8-7 JP Sullivan
9-2 Freewheelin, 5-1 Zuckerberg, 6-1 Zephlyn, 8-1 Paramaribo, Socks Off, 10-1 Calevade, La Belle Vie, Cloudy Rose.

4.01 Handicap (£8,100: 7f) (14)
1 (6) 0026- FAME AND ACCLAIM 168 (D) M Appleby 6-9-9 A Rawlinson
2 (2) 330-0 ANOTHER BATT 74 (D) D & N Barron 8-9-6 J Hart
3 (11) 3316- WOBWOBWOB 167 (D) A Keatley 5-9-6Ryan Sexton (3)
4 (1) 0054- DARKNESS 282 (D) D O'Meara 5-9-6 Jason Watson
5 (14) 2266- IT JUST TAKES TIME 156 (C,D) M Walford 5-9-5J Garritty
6 (3) 0333- DANZAN 156 (P,D) T Easterby 8-9-2 D Allan
7 (8) 6000- MAYWAKE 167 (D) R Fahey 5-9-0 Oisin Orr
8 (12) 20-00 BROKEN SPEAR 9 (P,D) T Coyle 7-8-13 T Eaves
9 (7) 0506- CHALLET 178 (D) M Dods 6-8-11 C Beasley
10(10) 0340- YAASER 185 (D) J Goldie 5-8-11 Mark Winn (5)
11 (9) 01502 PERSEVERANTS 8 (D) S Dixon 5-8-11 D Swift
12(13) 02251 GORAK 8 (P,D) C Fellowes 4-8-11(5ex) P J McDonald
13 (4) 0512- THE COOKSTOWN CAFU 170 K Ryan 4-8-10 R Scott
14 (5) 5110- DEPUTY 160 (BF,D) M Dods 5-8-9 G Lee
7-2 Gorak, 7-1 Darkness, 8-1 The Cookstown Cafu, 10-1 others.

4.36 Handicap (£8,100: 6f) (13)
1 (5) 004-0 MAGICAL SPIRIT 8 (P,D) K Ryan 7-9-9 T Eaves
2 (4) 3500- BIELSA 184 (CD) K Ryan 8-9-8 S Gray
3 (11) 2006- JUST FRANK 171 (T,D) T Easterby 5-9-6 D Allan
4 (7) 0430- GHATHANFAR 211 (CD) T Waggott 7-9-4 D Swift
5 (3) 0014- MARSHAL DAN 156 (D) H Main 8-9-3 J Bryan
6 (9) 5005- RATHBONE 174 (D) M Herrington 7-9-1 J Hart
7 (12) 1-012 BLIND BEGGAR 8 (V,D) M Appleby 5-8-12 A Rawlinson
8 (10) 005-0 FORTAMOUR 27 (D) B Haslam 7-8-10 P Hanagan
9 (8) 0300- OBJECT 173 (D) T Easterby 4-8-10 D Fentiman
10 (6) 35060 ABOLISH 27 (P,D) I Jardine 7-8-9 A Mullen
11(13) /030- BABA REZA 198 (D) J Camacho 5-8-6 G Lee
12 (2) 4604- TWELFTH KNIGHT 196 (D) R Carr 4-8-6 JP Sullivan
13 (1) 1660- PRODIGIOUS BLUE 226 (C) N Tinkler 4-8-4 A Breslin (3)
4-1 Blind Beggar, 5-1 Marshal Dan, 7-1 Bielsa, 8-1 Ghathanfar, 10-1 others.

5.11 Handicap (3-Y-O: £3,481: 1m) (9)
1 (7) 550- ROARING RALPH 219 M Dods 9-9 C Beasley
2 (4) 0432- EDMUND IRONSIDE 160 K R Burke 9-9 P-L Jamin (3)
3 (8) 3614- MY HONEY B 154 (D) M & D Easterby 9-9 Joanna Mason
4 (9) 0066 PUB CLUB 24 (V) H Palmer 9-8 R Coakley
5 (5) 6064- ARKENSTAAR 168 M Dods 9-5 P Mulrennan
6 (3) 600- CONCORDE 158 G Boughey 8-13 J Hart
7 (2) 000- EYEOFTHEBEHOLDER 219 T Easterby 8-12 D Allan
8 (6) 500- KNIGHTS SPEAR 188 T Easterby 8-10 D Fentiman
9 (1) 233-2 CAMACHO STAR 27 K Ryan 8-9 T Eaves
3-1 Edmund Ironside, 4-1 Arkenstaar, 9-2 Concorde, 6-1 others.

5.46 Handicap (3-Y-O: £3,481: 6f) (13)
1 (9) 060-4 SMOOTH RED 98 (H) Ewan Whillans 9-11 J Hart
2 (8) 4660- STORMY PEARL 183 (P,D) R Menzies 9-10 P Mulrennan
3 (7) 030-2 CHEYENNE NATION 6 M Dods 9-10 C Beasley
4 (2) 5304- PURPLE MARTINI 160 B Haslam 9-8 G Lee
5 (10) 030-3 SMILE AND PAY 8 (B) Craig Lidster 9-7 W Pyle (7)
6 (5) -0000 CREDIT SCORE 38 R Fell 9-7 J Peate (5)
7 (12) 3006- DRESDEN GREEN 157 R Carr 9-7 JP Sullivan
8 (11) 5-003 BRIDGE WATER 54 (P,T) M Botti 9-4 S Cherchi
9 (4) 00-0 HEART OF SOFIA 60 N Tinkler 9-4 R Scott
10 (6) 66-00 NAUGHTY TED 67 Liam Bailey 9-4 D Allan
11 (1) 0040- THE CAMACHO KID 171 D Carroll 9-2 H Shaw
12(13) 600-5 HOLLOWAY GIRL 32 K Ryan 9-1 S Gray
13 (3) 0000 LADY LOVELESS 32 Phillip Makin 9-0 Mark Winn (5)
7-2 Cheyenne Nation, 5-1 Smooth Red, 6-1 Bridge Water, 8-1 others.

Fairyhouse (selected)
Rob Wright

2.40 Blood Destiny **4.20** Easy Game
3.15 Cadatharla **5.00** Thedevilscoachman
3.50 Monkfish
Going: hurdle: yielding, yielding to soft in places; chase: soft, yielding in places **Racing TV**

2.40 Donohue Marquees Juvenile Hurdle (Grade 2) ITV4
(4-Y-O: £24,000: 2m) (9)
1 2-110 BLOOD DESTINY 24 (H,T,CD) W P Mullins 11-0 P Townend
2 063 CARSLAKE F4 Aengus King 11-0 P T Enright
3 110 COUGAR 105 (H,D) P Roche 11-0 S D Torrens
4 154 GUST OF WIND 24 W P Mullins 11-0 S O'Keeffe
5 242 PARADISE LOST F12 (BF) C O'Brien 11-0 Jack Foley
6 26 RIGHTSOTOM 24 T Mullins 11-0 D E Mullins
7 2110 SIR ALLEN 27 (D) A Slattery 11-0 Rachael Blackmore
8 3130 TEKAO 27 (H,BF,D) W P Mullins 11-0 M P Walsh
9 3 ENJOY THE DREAM 51 A McNamara 10-7 D J O'Keeffe
6-5 Blood Destiny, 10-3 Gust Of Wind, 9-2 Tekao, 8-1 Cougar, Sir Allen, 14-1 Rightsotom, 33-1 Paradise Lost, 50-1 Enjoy The Dream, 100-1 Carslake.
Wright choice: Blood Destiny raced too keenly early on when ninth in the Triumph Hurdle **Dangers** Gust Of Wind, Tekao

3.15 Fairyhouse Steel Handicap Hurdle ITV4
(£15,000: 2m 6f) (22)
1 -P1P6 GALORE DESASSENCES 60 G Cromwell 7-11-12 K E Buckley (3)
2 -0215 HEIA 256 (C) W P Mullins 6-11-8 D E Mullins
3 -3P00 HIGHLAND CHARGE 24 N Meade 8-11-8 L A McKenna (5)
4 30105 MACGILONEY 170 D Hogan 10-11-8 M M McDonagh (5)
5 0-000 DROP THE ANCHOR 29 P A Fahy 9-11-7 C G O'Dwyer (7)
6 -2134 HUBRISKO 150 (T,BF) W P Mullins 6-11-7 Jack Foley
7 04-03 LUNAR POWER F136 (P) N Meade 5-11-4 D O'Regan
8 40FF5 JAYCEAN 23 G Elliott 6-11-3 M J M O'Sullivan (5)
9 30311 OTTOMAN STYLE 24 (T,D) D A McLoughlin 7-11-3 C D Maxwell
10 00512 CADATHARLA 44 Colm Murphy 5-11-1 A P Kelly (7)
11 6-01P HAXO 24 W P Mullins 6-11-1 B Hayes
12 40102 WHATSAVAILABLE 28 (T,BF,C) M F Morris 6-11-1D J O'Keeffe
13 21634 EYE VAN 21 R P Cody 9-10-13 Rachael Blackmore
14 50P06 A GREAT VIEW 50 (B) D Cullen 12-10-11 M P Walsh
15 0-561 PAPAL LODGE 28 Peter Fahey 7-10-9 S W Flanagan
16 51/2P ZOFFANY BAY 30 Peter Fahey 9-10-9 K Sexton
17 -3F64 AILIE ROSE 29 S Crawford 7-10-6 P J O'Hanlon (5)
18 -1103 UNANSWERED 37 (T) A J Martin 6-10-3 P J Carberry
19 1-521 WAITTILLITELLYOU 18 (T) E Cawley 9-10-3 P T Enright
20 316F5 PALE BLUE DOT 36 D Hogan 7-10-0 M P O'Connor (5)
21 -2332 THE FLIER BEGLEY 24 S Crawford 8-10-0 S O'Keeffe
22 00034 MEMORY OF YOUTH 11 (B,C) Mrs D Foster 9-10-0 L Dempsey
5-1 Cadatharla, 13-2 Hubrisko, 8-1 Ottoman Style, Heia, 10-1 Unanswered, Lunar Power, 12-1 Whatsavailable, Drop The Anchor, A Great View.
Wright choice: Cadatharla ran a cracker when beaten a neck here; unexposed **Dangers** Ailie Rose, Waittillitellyou

3.50 Rathbarry & Glenview Studs Hurdle (Grade 2) ITV4
(£36,000: 2m 4f) (6)
1 13510 FIL DOR 26 (T,C) G Elliott 5-11-8 K M Donoghue
2 F40-2 ASTERION FORLONGE 23 (T,BF) W P Mullins 9-11-3 P Townend
3 5P430 BEACON EDGE 26 N Meade 9-11-3 Rachael Blackmore
4 -3310 HMS SEAHORSE 26 (C,D) P Nolan 5-11-3 S D Torrens
5 222-4 MASTER MCSHEE 120 (T) P Corkery 9-11-3 I J Power
6 11/2- MONKFISH 713 (BF,C) W P Mullins 9-11-3 D E Mullins
2-1 Asterion Forlonge, 9-4 Monkfish, 5-1 Fil Dor, 7-1 Beacon Edge, 8-1 Hms Seahorse, 10-1 Master McShee.
Wright choice: Monkfish, four times a winner at the highest level, can defy a long absence **Danger** Asterion Forlonge

4.20 McInerney Properties Fairyhouse Chase (Grade 2) ITV4
(£60,000: 2m 4f) (6)
1 11011 EASY GAME 191 (CD) W P Mullins 9-11-10 P Townend
2 F-P10 JANIDIL 25 (CD) W P Mullins 9-11-10 M P Walsh
3 P-105 ROYAL RENDEZVOUS 78 (H,D) W P Mullins 11-11-10 D E Mullins
4 12524 FRENCH DYNAMITE 25 (P,T,D) M F Morris 8-11-7 D J O'Keeffe
5 -P15P KAPARD 233 (P,T,D) H De Bromhead 7-10-11 S W Flanagan
6 1221R MAGIC DAZE 24 (T) H De Bromhead 7-10-11 Rachael Blackmore
15-8 Easy Game, 9-4 Janidil, 5-2 French Dynamite, 8-1 Magic Daze, 10-1 Royal Rendezvous, 50-1 Kapard.
Wright choice: Easy Game has won this for the past two years; will be fresh after a break **Danger** French Dynamite

5.00 BoyleSports Irish Grand National Chase (Extended Handicap Chase) ITV4
(£275,000: 3m 5f) (33)
1 55-26 ROYALE PAGAILLE 24 V Williams (UK) 9-11-12 C Deutsch
2 5-551 ESPANITO BELLO 29 B Connell 9-11-3(11ex) M J M O'Sullivan (5)
3 22154 BUSSELTON 21 (B) J P O'Brien 6-11-1 S Fitzgerald (3)
4 -2244 I AM MAXIMUS 26 W P Mullins 7-11-1 P Townend
5 -1142 CHEMICAL ENERGY 27 G Elliott 7-10-13 K M Donoghue
6 12314 THE GOFFER 27 G Elliott 6-10-13 D O'Regan
7 -1F11 THEDEVILSCOACHMAN 15 N Meade 7-10-13(2ex) M P Walsh
8 11422 ASH TREE MEADOW 171 (T,BF) G Elliott 7-10-11 S W Flanagan
9 -1FF5 FIRE ATTACK 21 J P O'Brien 8-10-9 R Deegan
10 1P3P0 MAX FLAMINGO 65 (P) Francis Casey 8-10-8 C D Maxwell
11 -3120 DOLCITA 24 (C) W P Mullins 8-10-7 D E Mullins
12 FF5P1 LIEUTENANT COMMAND 36 (P,C) N Meade 9-10-7 L A McKenna (5)
13 -2254 TENZING 27 W P Mullins 6-10-7 S O'Keeffe
14 1443F PANDA BOY 36 M Brassil 7-10-6 R Doyle
15 -13U3 AMIRITE 71 (C) H De Bromhead 7-10-4 Rachael Blackmore
16 421U1 ANGELS DAWN 25 S Curling 8-10-4(9ex) P T Enright
17 -34UP FAIRYHILL RUN 24 J P Ryan 8-10-3 M P O'Connor (5)
18 U10P6 PUNITIVE 8 (B,CD) G Elliott 9-10-3 C McGivern (7)
19 44210 REAL STEEL 64 (C) E McNamara 10-10-3 C P McNamara
20 00P35 DEFI BLEU 25 (P,T,C) G Elliott 10-10-2 Gavin Brouder (5)
21 6P04P BIRCHDALE 36 (P,BF) E Bolger 9-10-1 A P Kelly (7)
22 F0004 CHAMPAGNE PLATINUM 50 (P) E Bolger 9-10-1 S D Torrens
23 4100U FARCEUR DU LARGE 29 (C) N Meade 8-10-1 G B Noonan (5)
24 2-163 NOW WHERE OR WHEN 44 (P,T,C) S Crawford 8-10-1 P J Carberry
25 103UP DONKEY YEARS 74 (P,T) E McNamara 9-10-0 M M McDonagh (5)
26 31454 GEVREY 25 (P,C) G Elliott 7-10-0 K Sexton
27 -F500 MILAN NATIVE 29 (B,T) G Elliott 10-10-0 C G O'Dwyer (7)
28 41144 MUST BE OBEYED 21 (C) T Gibney 7-10-0 D J O'Keeffe
29 30112 STUMPTOWN 25 (BF) G Cromwell 6-10-0 L Dempsey
30 420PP FAKIERA 8 (B,T) G Elliott 8-10-0 Conor Clarke (7)
6-1 Thedevilscoachman, 15-2 Panda Boy, 8-1 I Am Maximus, 10-1 Espanito Bello, Tenzing, Angels Dawn, Stumptown, 12-1 Chemical Energy, Amirite.
Wright choice: Thedevilscoachman is progressive and could appreciate this test **Dangers** Chemical Energy, Real Steel

Thedevilscoachman can lift the Irish National for Meade

Racing
Rob Wright Racing Editor

Thedevilscoachman is progressing with every start over fences and he can claim another success in the BoyleSports Irish Grand National Handicap Chase (5.00) at Fairyhouse today.

His only defeat this season came when falling in grade one company at this track in December but he has looked much more at home since stepping up in trip, taking grade three prizes on his past two starts.

He always looked in control when a smooth winner at Limerick last time and the strength of his finish suggested that this first attempt at a marathon trip could see him in an even better light.

With Mark Walsh back on board, Thedevilscoachman can provide veteran trainer Noel Meade with a belated second win in this race, having won it previously with The Bunny Boiler back in 2002.

There is a strong supporting card, with **Blood Destiny** taken to bounce back from his poor run at the Cheltenham Festival by landing the Donohue Marquees Juvenile Hurdle (2.40). He is fitted with a hood here in an effort to help him to relax, as he pulled much too hard in the early stages of the race when only ninth in the Triumph Hurdle.

Cadatharla makes plenty of appeal in the Fairyhouse Steel Handicap Hurdle (3.15). He went down by a neck to L'yser at this track last time, with the pair pulling well clear of the rest of the field.

L'yser gave that form a healthy boost when winning off a 9lb higher mark here yesterday and Cadatharla, who has had just five starts over hurdles, remains open to plenty of improvement.

The Willie Mullins-trained **Monkfish** has been off the track for nearly two years but he is taken to make a successful return in the Rathbarry & Glenview Studs Hurdle (3.50). Winner of the 2020 Albert Bartlett Novices' Hurdle at Cheltenham, he added a second Festival success to his record when an impressive scorer in the Brown Advisory Novices' Chase the following year.

He reverts to hurdles for this return from a tendon injury but would be in a different class to this field at his best and the fact that stable jockey Paul Townend rides him in preference to stablemate Asterion Forlonge is encouraging.

East End Girl (3.07) rates the best bet of the day at Fakenham. A fair middle-distance performer on the Flat, this mare won on her second start over jumps at Huntingdon in November.

She disappointed on her next outing at Sedgefield, though, and was then given an operation to help with her breathing.

The impact of that was not instant, as she was again below-par at Huntingdon next time out, but she then ran a cracker when second to the improving Fiston De Becon at Market Rasen, not helped by the winner hanging across her on the run-in.

She drops in class here and, well-treated judged on her Flat form, East End Girl can get back to winning ways.



Walsh could lift the Irish Grand National

Leeds hint at title potential with second-half comeback

Leeds Rhinos	18
Huddersfield	17

Betfred Super League
Ross Heppenstall

Leeds Rhinos's season continues to flit from the ridiculous to the sublime as they ground out a dramatic one-point victory over their West Yorkshire rivals Huddersfield Giants.

The eight-times Super League champions have blown hot and cold in this campaign and were 13-4 behind at half-time. But they produced a comeback to savour, which hinted at their title potential, despite a patchy start.

When Huddersfield assumed control with two early tries and the Rhinos had their full back, Richie Myler, sent to the sin-bin, the game appeared to be heading only one way.

However, Ash Handley, the wing, crossed for the home side before the interval, then second-half scores from James McDonnell, Rhyse Martin and Cameron Smith saw them home.

Huddersfield led in the fourth minute when Jermaine McGillvary collected a pass from Tui Lolohea and dived over in the right corner. Three minutes later, Chris Hill, the veteran prop, produced a delightful offload to send the back-rower, Chris McQueen, barging through some flimsy Leeds defending.

Jake Connor's conversion put Huddersfield 10-0 up and soon after Leeds lost Myler to the sin-bin for ten minutes after a high tackle on McGillvary. Yet the Rhinos refused to buckle and, buoyed by the introduction off the bench of Zane Tetevano and Sam Lisone, they began to dominate. They got off the mark in the 34th minute when a neat sequence culminated in Blake Austin sending Handley over.

A penalty and a drop-goal from Connor put the away side 13-4 ahead at the break but Leeds upped the tempo and scored within seven minutes of the restart when Austin ushered McDonnell over. Harry Newman then drove at the Huddersfield defence, before the ball was worked to the left corner where Austin's long pass sent Martin over.

Leeds had the momentum, and when Huddersfield failed to deal with Aidan Sezer's high bomb, Smith pounced. Martin converted to put his side 18-13 ahead. There was more drama to come as McQueen fell on Connor's grubber for his second try but Connor missed the conversion and Leeds clung on.

Leeds Rhinos R Myler; N Macdonald, H Newman, R Martin, A Handley; B Austin, A Sezer; M Oledzki, J O'Connor, T Holroyd, J McDonnell, J Bentley, C Smith. **Interchange** C Johnson, Z Tetevano, S Lisone, J Sangare.

Huddersfield Giants W Pryce; J McGillvary, K Naiqama, E Marsters, S Halsall; T Lolohea, J Connor; C Hill, N Peats, M English, H Livett, C McQueen, L Yates. **Interchange** A O'Brien, H Rushton, S Ikahihifo, J Ashworth.

Kempton Park
Rob Wright

2.20 Equiart
2.55 Dancing Goddess
3.30 Slipofthepen
4.05 Pride Of Priory
4.40 Laurel
5.15 Al Marmar
5.50 Kiwano

Going: standard to slow — **Racing TV**
Draw: 5f-1m, low numbers best

2.20 Racing TV/EBF Restricted Restricted Novice Stakes
(2-Y-O: £5,346: 5f) (9 runners)

1	(7)		**ACTION POINT** A Watson 9-7	**H Doyle**	--
2	(4)		**SPANISH PHOENIX** A Balding 9-7	**O Murphy**	--
3	(8)		**CAT AND THE FIDDLE** R Hughes 9-5	**David Egan**	--
4	(3)		**EQUIART** Darryll Holland 9-3	**D Tudhope**	--
5	(2)	0	**NO SINNER** 9 W G M Turner 9-3	**L Keniry**	♦99
6	(5)		**PONGA** M Bell 9-3	**James Doyle**	--
7	(1)		**BARIKA** S C Williams 9-2	**R Kingscote**	--
8	(9)		**DAPPERLING** R Hannon 9-2	**S M Levey**	--
9	(6)		**ANFAAL** Tom Clover 9-0	**J Mitchell**	--

11-4 Spanish Phoenix, 3-1 Dapperling, 13-2 Action Point, No Sinner, 7-1 Anfaal, Ponga, 10-1 others.

2.55 Racing TV Fillies' Conditions Stakes (3-Y-O: £12,885: 1m) (5) — ITV4

1	(4)	1-	**DANCING GODDESS** 159 (C) C Appleby 9-6	**W Buick**	92
2	(1)	1-	**RAINBOW SKY** 143 (CD) C Appleby 9-6	**James Doyle**	77
3	(3)	411-	**RUNNING LION** 179 (D) J & T Gosden 9-6	**O Murphy**	♦96
4	(5)	41-	**ELLEXIS** 229 R Teal 9-2	**J Mitchell**	79
5	(2)	10-	**RICH** 199 R Hannon 9-2	**P Dobbs**	84

15-8 Dancing Goddess, 5-2 Running Lion, 10-3 Rainbow Sky, 13-2 Rich, 8-1 Ellexis.

Rob Wright's choice: Dancing Goddess made a pleasing start at this track and should appreciate this extra furlong **Danger** Running Lion

3.30 Join Racing TV Now Conditions Stakes (3-Y-O: £12,885: 1m) (5) — ITV4

1	(4)	41-	**LEGEND OF LEROS** 171 M Botti 9-6	**A Atzeni**	93
2	(1)	1-	**ROYAL RHYME** 210 (W,T) K R Burke 9-6	**C Lee**	♦98
3	(2)	1-	**SLIPOFTHEPEN** 131 (CD) J & T Gosden 9-6	**James Doyle**	96
4	(5)	3-4	**ENSUED** 16 J Fanshawe 9-2	**R L Moore**	84
5	(3)		**AZEEZAN** J Butler 8-13	**David Egan**	--

8-11 Slipofthepen, 3-1 Royal Rhyme, 5-1 Legend Of Leros, 10-1 Ensued, 50-1 Azeezan.

Wright choice: Slipofthepen was impressive when making a winning debut over this course and distance; can follow up **Danger** Legend Of Lyros

4.05 Racing TV Rosebery Handicap — ITV4
(£25,770: 1m 3f) (14)

1	(1)	50500-	**SOTO SIZZLER** 183 G L Moore 8-9-12	**T P Queally**	92
2	(9)	11105-	**PRIDE OF PRIORY** 183 (CD) W Haggas 5-9-8	**R L Moore**	94
3	(7)	310-01	**PRYDWEN** 35 G Scott 5-9-7	**B Curtis**	♦96
4	(8)	06110-	**JEWEL IN MY CROWN** 165 (CD) R Guest 5-9-6	**C Shepherd**	91
5	(2)	12000-	**CAP FRANCAIS** 258 I Williams 7-9-5	**R Kingscote**	85
6	(6)	/0003-	**MAX MAYHEM** 178 K P De Foy 5-9-4	**B Sayette (3)**	95
7	(14)	22220-	**HMS PRESIDENT** 184 A King 6-9-4	**Rossa Ryan**	93
8	(3)	4152-2	**SIR RUMI** 8 R Hannon 5-9-1	**K Stott**	83
9	(13)	1110-1	**SIMPLY SONDHEIM** 9 (CD) G Boughey 4-9-1	**W Buick**	90
10	(4)	/10-16	**EVANIA** 35 (BF,C) K P De Foy 5-9-1	**A Atzeni**	90
11	(11)	51330-	**WANDERING ROCKS** 170 (T) J Fanshawe 4-9-1	**D Muscutt**	85
12	(10)	20630-	**KENZAI WARRIOR** J70 (C) R Teal 6-9-1	**J Mitchell**	90
13	(12)	43060-	**SAVVY KNIGHT** 170 (D) S P C Woods 4-8-13	**James Doyle**	83
14	(5)	1-2221	**CAPITAL THEORY** 39 Charlie Johnston 4-8-13	**F Norton**	88

5-1 Simply Sondheim, 11-2 Max Mayhem, 13-2 Sir Rumi, 15-2 Pride Of Priory, 8-1 Capital Theory, Wandering Rocks, Prydwen, 10-1 Evania.

Wright choice: Pride Of Priory won both starts on an artificial surface last year; he can make a successful return **Dangers** Max Mayhem, Sir Rumi

4.40 Racing TV Snowdrop Fillies' Stakes (Listed) (£28,355: 1m) (9) — ITV4

1	(6)	10620-	**ABHAYAA** 170 (D) Mlle C Fey (FR) 4-9-2	**Eddy Hardouin**	75
2	(5)	32010-	**DON'T TELL CLAIRE** 157 (P,D) D & C Kubler 6-9-2	**J Mitchell**	79
3	(8)	10033-	**INISHNEE** 218 (D) W McCreery (Ire) 4-9-2	**James Doyle**	--
4	(9)	112-	**LAUREL** 191 (CD) J & T Gosden 4-9-2	**R L Moore**	♦100
5	(3)	12530-	**LIFE OF DREAMS** 156 C Appleby 4-9-2	**W Buick**	84
6	(7)	04-411	**LIGHTSHIP** 47 (CD) K P De Foy 4-9-2	**D Muscutt**	87
7	(1)	50000-	**MAGNIFICENCE** 171 (T) Brian O'Rourke 5-9-2	**K Shoemark**	67
8	(4)	1/144-	**SOUND ANGELA** 208 (C,D) R Varian 4-9-2	**David Egan**	90
9	(2)	/2142-	**TANGO TONIGHT** 208 H Morrison 4-9-2	**O Murphy**	60

2-5 Laurel, 11-2 Sound Angela, 13-2 Life Of Dreams, 14-1 Abhayaa, 20-1 Inishnee, 25-1 Lightship, 50-1 Don't Tell Claire, 100-1 Tango Tonight, 150-1 Magnificence.

Wright choice: Laurel was a good three-quarter length second to Fonteyn in the group one Sun Chariot Stakes **Dangers** Lightship, Sound Angela

5.15 racingtv.com Handicap
(£12,885: 1m) (6)

1	(6)	1012-6	**EXCEL POWER** 87 (BF,D) A Watson 5-9-9	**L Morris**	♦104
2	(5)	0005-6	**SIR DANCEALOT** 12 (C) J Butler 9-9-5	**David Egan**	92
3	(4)	13000-	**AUSTRIAN THEORY** 164 (D) Charlie Johnston 4-9-2	**J Fanning**	93
4	(1)	2-1040	**IMPERIAL SANDS** 30 (B,CD) A Watson 5-9-2	**H Doyle**	99
5	(3)	44-624	**NAVAL COMMANDER** 9 (C,D) R Brisland 6-8-12	**K O'Neill**	93
6	(2)	520-00	**AL MARMAR** 9 (P,D) A Balding 4-8-7	**O Murphy**	78

2-1 Excel Power, 5-2 Naval Commander, 11-2 Sir Dancealot, 7-1 Austrian Theory, 15-2 Imperial Sands, 8-1 Al Marmar.

5.50 Wise Betting At Racing TV Handicap
(£12,885: 6f) (12)

1	(5)	01100-	**FRESH** 177 (T,CD) J Fanshawe 6-9-9	**D Tudhope**	91
2	(2)	00363-	**SILVER SAMURAI** 184 (D) M Botti 6-9-5	**A Atzeni**	89
3	(7)	10/13-	**PROP FORWARD** 251 (H,D) C Cox 5-9-4	**K Shoemark**	♦98
4	(10)	/1006-	**BLACKROD** 218 (P,D) R Teal 5-9-3	**J Mitchell**	85
5	(9)	53-510	**DUBAI STATION** 12 (T,D) S C Williams 6-9-1	**Rossa Ryan**	95
6	(3)	/240-2	**FERNANDO RAH** 58 (D) C Cox 5-9-1	**J Fahy**	94
7	(8)	4-1513	**KIWANO** 16 (CD) D M Simcock 4-9-0	**J P Spencer**	94
8	(12)	64-114	**BADRI** 16 (BF,D) R Carr 6-8-13	**L Edmunds**	93
9	(6)	50045-	**DIG TWO** 187 (B,D) Ollie Sangster 4-8-9	**O Murphy**	88
10	(11)	0233-4	**INGRA TOR** 30 (BF,D) Jack Channon 4-8-8	**B Curtis**	85
11	(4)	5050-5	**NAVELLO** 16 G Boughey 4-8-6	**H Doyle**	73
12	(1)	000-30	**ROYAL PARADE** 16 (BF,D) M Appleby 4-8-5	**L Morris**	85

5-1 Fernando Rah, 11-2 Prop Forward, Kiwano, 6-1 Badri, 13-2 Ingra Tor, 8-1 Fresh, 10-1 Silver Samurai, Blackrod.

Wolverhampton
Rob Wright

1.41 Painters Palette
2.18 Old Harrovian
2.53 Doctor Mozart
3.28 Odin Owns You All
4.03 Sweet Mist
4.38 Sarkha
5.13 Giselles Izzy

Going: standard — **Sky Sports Racing**
Draw: 5f-7f, low numbers best

1.41 Handicap (£5,129: 1m 1f 104yd) (6)

1	(2)	1455-	**THE CONQUEROR** 197 (D) J Boyle 5-10-0	**M Tabti**
2	(4)	423-1	**PAINTERS PALETTE** 28 (T,CD) R Menzies 4-9-13	**Alec Voikhansky**
3	(6)	03-31	**FIRST DYNASTY** 86 Tom Clover 4-9-13	**C Planas**
4	(3)	1624-	**BUXTED REEL** 180 (H,C) I Williams 4-9-6	**J Leavy (5)**
5	(1)	-0260	**HARBOUR VISION** 24 (V,CD) S Dixon 8-9-5	**L Williams**
6	(5)	54-06	**LIGHT UP OUR STARS** 9 (H,CD) S Dixon 7-9-4	**Liam Wright (3)**

11-10 Painters Palette, 9-4 First Dynasty, 7-1 Buxted Reel, 12-1 The Conqueror, Light Up Our Stars, 16-1 Harbour Vision.

2.18 Novice Stakes
(£4,320: 1m 4f) (7)

1	(2)	0-1	**OLD HARROVIAN** 7 (D) A Balding 4-9-11	**C Hutchinson (5)**
2	(4)	0042-	**ACTIVE DUTY** J24 B Pauling 4-9-4	**C Bishop**
3	(6)	5	**ITS GOING ROME** 34 D Faulkner 5-9-4	**Gina Mangan (5)**
4	(5)	34-	**LUMBERJACK** 237 D Loughnane 4-9-4	**Laura Pearson (3)**
5	(3)	3-	**WILD HURRICANE** 149 (BF) S bin Suroor 5-9-4	**D Probert**
6	(7)		**SHE'S OUT OF REACH** J100 L Allan 5-8-13	**C Howarth (5)**
7	(1)	03-	**STEPMOTHER** 285 M Attwater 4-8-13	**W Carson**

2-1 Active Duty, 9-4 Old Harrovian, 5-2 Wild Hurricane, 8-1 Stepmother, 12-1 Lumberjack, 50-1 Its Going Rome, 100-1 She's Out Of Reach.

2.53 Selling Stakes (£4,320: 5f) (5)

1	(2)	4060-	**THE DALEY EXPRESS** 132 (P,CD) R Harris 9-9-12	**T Whelan**
2	(4)	26000	**SHOW ME A SUNSET** 12 (T,V,C,D) C Wallis 7-9-10	**C Hardie**
3	(3)	000/0	**ROCKET ACTION** 39 (T,CD) I Furtado 7-9-7	**E-M Croot (7)**
4	(5)	46331	**DOCTOR MOZART** 6 (B,D) P Evans 3-9-1	**P Cosgrave**
5	(1)	6-265	**POR TI VOLARE** 45 B Barr 3-8-5	**Georgia Dobie (3)**

13-8 Rocket Action, 9-4 Doctor Mozart, 3-1 The Daley Express, 6-1 Show Me A Sunset, 50-1 Por Ti Volare.

3.28 Handicap (3-Y-O: £5,129: 7f) (5)

1	(1)	521	**ODIN OWNS YOU ALL** 46 (D) M Bell 9-9	**H Crouch**
2	(4)	2363-	**OUT OF SHADOWS** 197 (P) M Botti 9-9	**D Probert**
3	(3)	106-2	**MRS U S A** 14 G Boughey 9-9	**P Cosgrave**
4	(2)	025-3	**ROMAN SPRING** 30 R Hannon 9-5	**D O'Neill**
5	(5)	540-	**TAMALUK** 171 Owen Burrows 9-2	**J Crowley**

13-8 Odin Owns You All, 9-4 Mrs U S A, 9-2 Out Of Shadows, 6-1 Tamaluk, 10-1 Roman Spring.

4.03 Handicap (£3,402: 7f) (7)

1	(4)	0-021	**SWEET MIST** 5 (CD) S Curran 4-9-9	**C Planas (5)**
2	(5)	0663-	**DANDYS DERRIERE** 184 (T,C) Oliver Greenall & Josh Guerriero 5-9-6	**D Probert**
3	(3)	56241	**TRIGGERED** 16 (D) M Loughnane 7-9-5	**R Dawson**
4	(7)	32-10	**EYE OF THE WATER** 35 (P,CD) R Harris 7-9-5	**T Whelan**
5	(2)	40030	**REBEL REDEMPTION** 2 (B,C) S Dixon 6-9-4	**Elisha Whittington (5)**
6	(6)	1/13-	**LINCOLN GAMBLE** 429 (T,CD) I Furtado 6-9-4	**M Ghiani**
7	(1)	340-5	**GHARBEYIH** 7 S Dixon 4-8-8	**C Hardie**

9-4 Sweet Mist, 3-1 Triggered, 4-1 Dandys Derriere, 6-1 Lincoln Gamble, 8-1 Eye Of The Water, 14-1 Gharbeyih, Rebel Redemption.

4.38 Handicap (£4,187: 1m 4f) (7)

1	(6)	1-000	**THE THUNDERER** 56 (T) Ollie Sangster 5-9-8	**C Planas (5)**
2	(2)	5605-	**SPYFALL** 177 (T) D Menuisier 4-9-8	**J Crowley**
3	(5)	-5325	**LEXINGTON KNIGHT** 5 (T,CD) R Hannon 5-9-8	**D O'Neill**
4	(7)	640-0	**EAGLE COURT** 35 (H,C) M Blake 6-9-6	**M Ghiani**
5	(1)	5650-	**BOOKMARK** 154 (D) M Loughnane 5-9-6	**R Dawson**
6	(4)	1206-	**MASQUE OF ANARCHY** 133 Craig Lidster 7-9-6	**S James**
7	(3)	000-	**SARKHA** 261 E Dunlop 4-9-4	**D Probert**

11-4 Spyfall, 3-1 Lexington Knight, 4-1 Masque Of Anarchy, 5-1 Sarkha, 8-1 Bookmark, 12-1 Eagle Court, The Thunderer.

5.13 Handicap (£4,187: 6f) (8)

1	(5)	11-00	**WESTMORIAN** 27 (D) G Tuer 4-9-11	**S James**
2	(6)	06120	**MURBIH** 7 (CD) A Brittain 4-9-10	**C Hardie**
3	(2)	4010-	**NEWYORKSTATEOFMIND** 191 (CD) R Carr 6-9-9	**C Rodriguez**
4	(3)	-5535	**MELLYS FLYER** 13 (H,D) G Scott 5-9-9	**M Ghiani**
5	(4)	26451	**EL HOMBRE** 16 (CD) M Loughnane 9-9-5	**R Dawson**
6	(8)	33-64	**UNDER THE TWILIGHT** 35 M Blake 5-9-5	**D Probert**
7	(1)	53532	**GISELLES IZZY** 41 (BF,D) I Jardine 4-8-4	**S Osborne**
8	(7)	0-015	**CATESBY** 27 (CD) S Dixon 6-8-4	**Elisha Whittington (5)**

11-4 El Hombre, 3-1 Giselles Izzy, 11-2 Under The Twilight, 6-1 others.

Yesterday's racing results

Ffos Las
Going: soft (good to soft in places)

1.40 (2m 4f, hdle) 1, **Cuthbert Dibble** (Sam Twiston-Davies, 4-7 fav); 2, Storminhome (16-5); 3, The Same (4-1). 6 ran. NR: Good Friday Fairy. 1¾l, 3¾l. N A Twiston -Davies.
2.15 (2m 3f 83yd, ch) 1, **Dicey Rielly** (Alan Johns, 5-4 fav); 2, Miss Antipova (13-2); 3, Ocean's Of Money (14-1). 6 ran. NR: Galante De Romay. 2½l, 11l. P Bowen.
2.50 (2m 4f, hdle) 1, **Kepagge** (Jack Tudor, 11-1); 2, Conkwell Legend (8-1); 3, Fine Casting (10-3 fav). 9 ran. ½l, 11l. D Pipe.
3.25 (3m 3f 208yd, ch) 1, **Truckers Lodge** (Freddie Gingell, 6-1); 2, Sidi Ismael (12-1); 3, Amateur (8-1). 9 ran. NR: Bushypark, Super Survivor. 3¼l, 1l. P F Nicholls.
4.00 (1m 7f 182yd, hdle) 1, **Benassi** (Lewis Stones, 9-4 fav); 2, Imperial Measure (8-1); 3, Port Or Starboard (4-1). 5 ran. NR: Thunderclap. 9l, 3¾l. O Murphy.
4.35 (2m 7f 177yd, ch) 1, **To Be Sure** (Adam Wedge, 9-1); 2, Bucks Dream (2-1 fav); 3, Reign Suepreme (20-1). 8 ran. NR: Tudors Treasure. 1¼l, 19l. Evan Williams.
5.10 (1m 7f 182yd, flat) 1, **The Jukebox Man** (Kielan Woods, 3-1 jt-fav); 2, He Knows Better (9-1); 3, Montys Soldier (10-3). 8 ran. 4¾l, 8l. B Pauling.
Placepot: £127.80. Quadpot: £60.60.

Market Rasen
Going: good to soft (soft in places)

1.34 (2m 125yd, hdle) 1, **Bizzy Moon** (Harry Skelton, 11-2); 2, Three Macks (3-1); 3, Bushtucker Park (2-1 fav). 7 ran. 2¾l, 7½l. D Skelton.
2.09 (2m 4f 139yd, hdle) 1, **Saladam** (S Bowen, 11-8 fav); 2, A Definite Getaway (4-1); 3, Night Duty (10-1). 10 ran. NR: Glenton. 1¼l, 4¾l. O Murphy.
2.44 (2m 4f 139yd, hdle) 1, **Grasse D'oliverie** (J J Burke, 7-1); 2, Emily Wade (3-1); 3, Denable (14-1). 10 ran. 3¾l, 3½l. A M Hales.
3.19 (2m 4f 139yd, hdle) 1, **Blue Bikini** (C Brace, 15-2); 2, Having A Barney (7-4 fav); 3, Minella Choice (15-8). 8 ran. NR: Secret Trix. 6½l, ½l. F O'Brien.
3.54 (2m 1f 43yd, ch) 1, **Snowy Clouds** (Sean Quinlan, 2-1 fav); 2, We'll Go Again (9-4); 3, Sayar (14-1). 6 ran. 14l, ¾l. N G Richards.
4.29 (2m 1f 43yd, ch) 1, **Jay Jay Reilly** (H Skelton, 2-1); 2, Great Heart'Jac (5-1); 3, Stormin Crossgales (13-2). 4 ran. 4¼l, 1½l. D Skelton.
5.04 (2m 7f 191yd, ch) 1, **Betty Baloo** (Mr William Easterby, 15-8 fav); 2, Eclair De Guye (5-1); 3, Who's In The Box (7-1). 7 ran. 15l, 4¼l. T D Easterby.
5.39 (2m 125yd, flat) 1, **Bhaloo** (L Harrison, 9-2); 2, Rockstown Native (11-1); 3, Take No Chances (5-4 fav). 8 ran. 3½l, 2½l. F O'Brien.
Placepot: £39.50. Quadpot: £10.80.

Plumpton
Going: good (good to soft in places)

1.55 (2m 4f 114yd, hdle) 1, **Abingworth** (Caoilin Quinn, 3-1 fav); 2, Proper Twelve (12-1); 3, Miss Get The Veuve (18-1). 13 ran. NR: Royal Mer, San Pedro De Senam. ½l, 2¼l. G L Moore.
2.30 (2m 214yd, ch) 1, **Pleasure Garden** (Tom Cannon, 17-2); 2, Elmount (5-1); 3, Clondaw Robin (50-1). 9 ran. NR: Mordred. 2¼l, 27l. K Jewell.
3.05 (1m 7f 195yd, hdle) 1, **Iskar D'airy** (J E Moore, 15-8 fav); 2, Highland Frolic (11-2); 3, Happy Boy (2-1). 9 ran. NR: Chankaya. 1¾l, 1l. G L Moore.
3.40 (3m 1f 152yd, ch) 1, **Northern Poet** (James Davies, 5-2); 2, Hiway One O Three (9-4 fav); 3, Pawpaw (10-3). 4 ran. Nk, 9½l. N J Gifford.
4.15 (1m 7f 195yd, hdle) 1, **Teddy Blue** (J E Moore, 11-4); 2, Get Back Get Back (22-1); 3, Aucunrisque (5-2 fav). 9 ran. NR: Blueking D'oroux, Hystery Bere. Sh hd, 3l. G L Moore.
4.50 (2m 4f 114yd, hdle) 1, **Bashers Reflection** (Harry Bannister, 6-1); 2, Cherry Cola (16-1); 3, Baddesley (14-1). 9 ran. NR: El Muchacho, Godot, Tightenourbelts. 1¼l, 4l. B I Case.
5.25 (2m 3f 164yd, ch) 1, **Ramore Will** (Angus Cheleda, 13-2); 2, Dindin (15-2); 3, Doyannie (13-8 fav). 6 ran. NR: Big 'n Better. ¾l, 7½l. C Gordon.
Placepot: £631.00.
Quadpot: £27.00.

Southwell
Going: standard

2.05 (4f 214yd) 1, **Just A Spark** (R Coakley, 11-2); 2, Wreck It Ryley (4-1); 3, Three Beauz (18-1). 13 ran. Nk, 1¼l. B R Millman.
2.40 (4f 214yd) 1, **Yorkshire Terrier** (Jason Hart, 11-4 fav); 2, Tees Douge (3-1); 3, Chumbaa (10-1). 9 ran. 3¼l, 1l. Charlie Johnston.
3.15 (1m 4f 14yd) 1, **Timewave** (Daniel Muscutt, 7-4 fav); 2, Queenmambo (11-2); 3, Sovereign Spirit (10-3). 4 ran. 1½l, ½l. Charlie Johnston.
3.50 (1m 13yd) 1, **Na Scoitear** (Rowan Scott, 5-1); 2, Leap Year Lad (3-1 fav); 3, Blue Yonder (8-1). 11 ran. ½l, ¾l. Phillip Makin.
4.25 (6f 16yd) 1, **Mountain Warrior** (Callum Rodriguez, 4-5 fav); 2, Della (12-1); 3, Global Effort (12-1). 7 ran. ¾l, 4½l. E Bethell.
5.00 (6f 16yd) 1, **Dark Side Thunder** (Lewis Edmunds, 3-1); 2, Mega Marvel (11-2); 3, Claim The Stars (12-1). 8 ran. NR: Blackjack. ½l, ½l. Jessica Macey.
5.35 (7f 14yd) 1, **Elladora** (Phil Dennis, 11-1); 2, Back From Dubai (7-1); 3, Written Broadcast (10-3). 12 ran. NR: Gonzaga. ½l, sh hd. K Scott.
Placepot: £56.10.
Quadpot: £14.50.

Bold Bohannon makes most of

Lancashire v Surrey

Old Trafford (final day of four): Lancashire (9pts) drew with Surrey (12pts)

Paul Edwards

Just over six months ago, Surrey's cricketers arrived at Emirates Old Trafford determined to celebrate the title they had won the previous week. Jordan Clark brought his guitar, the Sky cameras were treated to some balcony japes and the fact that Lancashire plundered an innings victory did nothing to spoil the moment when Rory Burns was presented with the LV= County Championship trophy.

Yesterday evening, Burns and his players left the same ground having spent four days offering ample evidence of their determination to retain English cricket's most prestigious prize.

However, they were ultimately denied by Josh Bohannon, who made 108 before he was bowled playing no shot to Dan Worrall. Nevertheless, Bohannon had offered further evidence that he is one of the most accomplished and resolute batsmen on the county circuit. Indeed, had things fallen differently, he might already have a Test cap or two to his name.

Bohannon resisted Surrey's attack for 234 minutes and for most of that time he was accompanied by Steven Croft, another cricketer whose Lancastrian loyalties are buried marrow deep. The pair put on 173 for the third wicket and had to survive a particularly brutal period in the middle of the afternoon when Kemar Roach and Sean Abbott dug it in nastily short and Burns placed three close catchers on the leg side.

Nothing was therefore more out of keeping with the temper of things than Bohannon reaching his century off the fifth ball Ollie Pope had bowled in first-class cricket or the comfort with which Lancashire ended the day on 247 for three — particularly given that the first session had been the perfect example of championship cricket at its intense best.

Lancashire's openers had survived for 45 minutes without undue alarm, but then Keaton Jennings, who had been bowled off his pads in the first innings when cramped by Clark's accuracy and the presence of Ben Foakes standing up to the wicket, fell to the same combination for 16.

Next over, Luke Wells's 63-ball 45 ended when he pulled Roach straight to Worrall at long leg and Surrey could also have removed Bohannon for two when he edged Abbott to slip but Pope dropped the tough two-handed chance. The ball had travelled quickly but it still occurred to someone that Easter Sunday morning was not the best time for a Pope to miss his moment.

Bohannon was pleased to hold out against a strong attack. "The pitch didn't have much in it for the seamers, spinning was hard work due to the pace of it, but they way we fought against an attack like that in the second innings was really good," he said. "Credit to our groundstaff who have managed to keep it so dry after the recent weather we've had. I don't think anyone expected it to play the way it has done."

Burns, the Surrey captain, was happy with their start to the season. "It was a pleasing four days," he said. "The way we've gone about our business, to hit the ground running has been impressive. There's been some good individual performances but it was solid too."



Bohannon shows he is among the most accomplished batsmen on the circuit



Porter finishes the job as Essex throw down their challenge

Middlesex v Essex

Lord's (final day of four): Essex (20 pts) beat Middlesex (3) by 97 runs

Geoffrey Dean

Essex served notice that they are potential title challengers with an emphatic victory that was wrapped up an hour after lunch, when Jamie Porter bowled Tim Murtagh to claim his ninth wicket of the match. For newly promoted Middlesex, this defeat was a chastening reminder, after a six-year absence, of the chasm between cricket in the first and second divisions.

Ryan Higgins and Luke Hollman at least provided some stern resistance with an eighth-wicket stand of 87 in 30 overs. After his first innings 70, Higgins battled hard for his 41 from 102 balls until Shane Snater straightened one up the hill to hit him plumb in front.

Hollman, the talented 22-year-old leg-spinning all-rounder, was left unbeaten on 63 from 121 balls.

Essex's head coach, Anthony McGrath, praised Dan Lawrence's "really mature" hundred in the first innings as the difference between the two sides.

"I think he got the balance right in this game between soaking up pressure when he needed to and attacking bowlers at the right moment," McGrath said of the England batsman.

"We know that when we're playing well, we're a difficult team to beat. The key for us is to get runs on the board as we've got an attack that can get 20 wickets. If we do that, we can be a headache to teams. Hopefully, we've got Simon Harmer [the South African off spinner] for the full summer." Richard Johnson, Middlesex's first-team coach, reflected that the difference was in how each team used the new ball.

"Our top three batsmen, all Test players, made a combined total of seven runs in the match," he said ruefully, with reference to the struggles of Mark Stoneman, Sam Robson and Dawid Malan. Essex, by contrast, managed to get off to a decent enough start in both of their innings.

Resuming on 77 for five with a target of 308, Middlesex lost the nightwatchman Tom Helm to a slip catch off the tenth ball of the day. The dismissal soon after of Stevie Eskinazi, who had resisted gamely for more than three hours, all but extinguished their faint hopes of victory. Half-forward to Porter, he was trapped in front by one that nipped back.

Higgins, who used his feet well to hit Harmer for six over wide long-on, and Hollman each countered the off spinner adroitly, applying themselves diligently on a fourth-day pitch that played well.

Their top order, though, had left them with too much to do.

Scoreboards and results

Cricket

LV= County Championship
Division One
Kent v Northamptonshire
Canterbury (final day of four): Kent (3pts) beat Northamptonshire (19) by seven wickets
Northamptonshire: First Innings 117 (M R Quinn 4 for 25)
Second Innings (overnight 300-7)
R I Keogh not out 116
G K Berg b Hogan 56
C J White lbw b Evison 7
C P Tremain lbw b Evison 0
Extras (b 2, lb 11) 13
Total (117.3 overs) 331
Fall of wickets 1-6, 2-30, 3-106, 4-109, 5-135, 6-176, 7-208, 8-308, 9-319.
Bowling Quinn 28-4-70-2; Hogan 34-6-93-1; Stewart 8-3-22-0; Evison 25.3-3-62-4; Leaning 5-2-11-1; Denly 6-0-18-0; Bell-Drummond 11-2-42-2.

Kent: First Innings 222 (Z Crawley 91; C P Tremain 5 for 44; C J White 4 for 57)
Second Innings
Z Crawley b Tremain 3
B G Compton not out 114
D J Bell-Drummond b Berg 32
J L Denly b Tremain 5
J A Leaning not out 67
Extras (lb 4nb 2) 6
Total (3 wkts, 64.5 overs) 227
Fall of wickets 1-3, 2-44, 3-60.
Bowling White 16-2-55-0; Tremain 13-4-40-2; Berg 10-2-38-1; Procter 10-2-25-0; Keogh 10.5-1-33-0; Sales 4-0-30-0; Cobb 1-0-2-0.
Umpires: P J Hartley and I D Blackwell

Lancashire v Surrey
Old Trafford (final day of four): Surrey (12pts) drew with Lancashire (9)
Surrey: First Innings 442 (C T Steel 141 not out; B T Foakes 76; J L Smith 54; T E Bailey 4 for 86)
Second Innings 292-6 dec (B T Foakes 103 not out; R J Burns 54; M W Parkinson 5 for 120)

Lancashire: First Innings 291 (K K Jennings 76; C de Grandhomme 67 not out; S A Abbott 5 for 50)
Second Innings
L W P Wells c Worrall b Roach 45
*K K Jennings b Clark 16
J J Bohannon b Worrall 108
S J Croft not out 56
D J Vilas not out 1
Extras (b 9, lb 1, w 3, nb 8) 21
Total (3 wkts, 87.1 overs) 247
Fall of wickets 1-65, 2-65, 3-238.
Bowling Roach 18-3-39-1; Worrall 17-3-42-1; Steel 20-1-80-0; Abbott 15-5-39-0; Clark 14-4-25-1; Burns 2.1-0-2-0; Pope 1-0-10-0.
Umpires: N A Mallender and D J Millns

Middlesex v Essex
Lord's (final day of four): Essex (20pts) beat Middlesex (3) by 97 runs
Essex: First Innings 266 (D W Lawrence 105; M J J Critchley 55; T S Roland-Jones 7 for 61)
Second Innings 211 (M J J Critchley 53; T J Murtagh 4 for 44)

Middlesex: First Innings 170 (R F Higgins 70; J A Simpson 63; J A Porter 6 for 35)
Second Innings (overnight 77-5)
S S Eskinazi lbw b Porter 37
T G Helm c A N Cook b S J Cook 0
R F Higgins lbw b Snater 41
L B K Hollman not out 63
*T S Roland-Jones c A N Cook b Snater 0
T J Murtagh b Porter 6
Extras (b 8, lb 4) 12
Total (83 overs) 210
Fall of wickets 1-0, 2-4, 3-15, 4-41, 5-76, 6-77, 7-93, 8-180, 9-180.
Bowling Porter 16-3-34-3; Cook 17-6-31-3; Snater 14-7-34-2; Allison 11-4-23-0; Harmer 24-7-72-1; Critchley 1-0-4-1.
Umpires: M Burns and R K Illingworth

Somerset v Warwickshire
Taunton (final day of four): Somerset (9pts) drew with Warwickshire (11)
Somerset: First Innings 284 (L Gregory 65)
Second Innings
T A Lammonby not out 66
S R Dickson c Yates b Hannon-Dalby 0
C T Bancroft lbw b Hannon-Dalby 0
T Kohler-Cadmore c Hain b Rushworth 15
G A Bartlett b Ali 20
†J E K Rew b Rushworth 14
*L Gregory b Hannon-Dalby 26
C Overton not out 29
Extras (b 2, lb 5, w 1, nb 2) 10
Total (6 wkts, 50 overs) 180
Fall of wickets 1-0, 2-2, 3-25, 4-62, 5-92, 6-127.
Bowling Rushworth 11-2-33-2; Hannon-Dalby 11-5-21-3; Ali 10-0-52-1; Barnard 5-0-20-0; Bethell 7-2-28-0; Yates 4-2-8-0; Mousley 2-0-11-0.

Warwickshire: First Innings (overnight 307-5)
S R Hain c Rew b Leach 119
†M G K Burgess b Siddle 46
J G Bethell b Davey 19
H Ali c Kohler-Cadmore b Gregory 15
C Rushworth c Overton b Gregory 1
O J Hannon-Dalby not out 1
Extras (lb 2, w 1, nb 8) 11
Total (109.5 overs) 392
Fall of wickets 1-2, 2-70, 3-203, 4-205, 5-236, 6-321, 7-350, 8-389, 9-391.
Bowling Davey 19-2-86-2; Overton 25-4-66-0; Siddle 20-5-47-2; Leach 29-5-119-4; Gregory 14.5-1-59-2; Bartlett 2-0-13-0.
Umpires: R J Bailey and A G Wharf

	P	W	L	D	Bat	Bwl	Pts
Essex	1	1	0	0	1	3	20
Hampshire	1	1	0	0	0	3	19
Kent	1	1	0	0	0	3	19
Surrey	1	0	0	1	4	3	12
Warwickshire	1	0	0	1	3	3	11
Somerset	1	0	0	1	1	3	9
Lancashire	1	0	0	1	1	3	9
Northamptonshire	1	0	1	0	0	3	3
Nottinghamshire	1	0	1	0	0	3	3
Middlesex	1	0	1	0	0	3	3

Division Two
Derbyshire v Worcestershire
Derby (final day of four): Worcestershire (22pts) beat Derbyshire (5) by eight wickets
Derbyshire: First Innings 321 (W L Madsen 87; B A Godleman 70; M J Waite 4 for 50)
Second Innings (overnight 269-6)
*J L du Plooy not out 95
Z J Chappell st Roderick b Leach 45
B W Aitchison c Gibbon b Tongue 0
S Conners c Pollock b Tongue 4
R A S Lakmal lbw b Tongue 0
Extras (b 2, lb 7, nb 6) 15
Total (95.5 overs) 343
Fall of wickets 1-134, 2-135, 3-171, 4-191, 5-234, 6-235, 7-324, 8-327, 9-335.
Bowling Leach 30-7-86-3; Tongue 21.5-0-98-3; Gibbon 16-2-57-1; Waite 15-4-56-1; D'Oliveira 13-0-37-2.

Worcestershire: First Innings 473 (M J Waite 109 not out; B L D'Oliveira 89; J A Haynes 62; Z J Chappell 5 for 69)
Second Innings
E J Pollock c Guest b Aitchison 13
J D Libby not out 104
A Ali lbw b Chappell 62
J A Haynes not out 10
Extras (lb 4) 4
Total (2 wkts, 42.1 overs) 193
Fall of wickets 1-17, 2-156.
Bowling Lakmal 5-0-29-0; Aitchison 8-0-33-1; Chappell 9-1-43-1; Conners 5-0-15-0; Dal 7.1-0-30-0; Lamb 8-1-39-0.
Umpires: N L Bainton and P K Baldwin

Glamorgan v Gloucestershire
SWALEC Stadium (final day of four): Gloucestershire (8pts) drew with Glamorgan (12)
Gloucestershire: First Innings 165 (M S Harris 59; T van der Gugten 5 for 26)
Second Innings (overnight 373-5)
*G L van Buuren not out 110
J M R Taylor c Cooke b Podmore 38
Z G Khan c sub b Carlson 28
T J Price not out 55
Extras (lb 3, w 1, nb 4) 8
Total (7 wkts dec, 138 overs) 569
Fall of wickets 1-161, 2-188, 3-299, 4-311, 5-370, 6-435, 7-481.
Bowling Podmore 24-3-95-2; van der Gugten 28-2-89-2; Harris 26-2-128-0; Douthwaite 22-3-97-1; Carlson 30-2-122-2; Lloyd 7-0-31-0; Byrom 1-0-4-0.

Glamorgan: First Innings 404 (W T Root 117 not out; K S Carlson 106; E J Byrom 81; T J Price 4 for 56)
Second Innings
*D L Lloyd c Harris b T J Price 6
E J Byrom not out 36

Pope's Easter mess

TAKA WU/ALAMY





Higgins, main image, digs in for Middlesex while, inset, Porter ends the resistance of Eskinazi as Essex opened with a victory

Leicestershire victory ends 113-year hoodoo

Round-up
Elizabeth Ammon

Leicestershire stunned Yorkshire by chasing down 389 to secure their first LV= County Championship victory since September 2021 — and win a first-class game at Headingley for the first time since 1910.

Rishi Patel scored his maiden first-class century as Leicestershire, set the daunting target in 87 overs, won with seven balls to spare. At 243 for three, Leicestershire still needed 146 in 27 overs but after Patel's 125, the Australian Peter Handscomb added 68 not out to his first-innings century and Chris Wright (40), hit the winning runs as Leicestershire started the Division Two season in style.

Worcestershire lead the way in the second tier, having secured maximum points in an eight-wicket victory over **Derbyshire** thanks to a 139-run partnership between Jake Libby (104 not out) and Azhar Ali (62).

At Hove, **Sussex** clinched a thrilling two-wicket victory against **Durham** with the south coast side winning their opening championship game of the season for the first time since 2015. The 21-year-old Ollie Carter steered them over the line with an unbeaten 33.

Kent got off to a winning start in Division One as Ben Compton's unbeaten 114 led them to a seven-wicket victory over Northamptonshire at Canterbury. Compton was aided by Jack Leaning, who hit 67 in an unbroken 167-run stand as Kent recovered from 60 for three to chase down 227.

Earlier, Rob Keogh and county cricket's oldest player, the 42-year-old Gareth Berg, had shared a century partnership.

Archer's elbow injury flares up again at IPL

Elizabeth Ammon

Jofra Archer has given the England management an injury scare after suffering "discomfort" in his troublesome right elbow.

It is believed that the fast bowler's decision not to play for Mumbai Indians against Chennai Super Kings on Saturday was precautionary but the England medical staff are keeping in contact with Archer's IPL franchise to manage his workload in the lead up to this summer's Ashes series.

Archer has had two operations on his right elbow since he last played a Test match in February 2021. His recovery from the original operation did not go to plan and further surgery was required. Then, just as Archer had almost completed his rehabilitation, he had a stress fracture in his lower back diagnosed, which meant he missed almost the whole of last summer.

The 28-year-old returned for England in January, in their limited-overs tours to South Africa and Bangladesh, where there were signs that he was back to bowling at his fastest — touching 90mph — and was on the way to being able to return to red-ball cricket after his IPL stint.

Archer's workload in the IPL will be managed in conjunction with the England medics but it is a concern that he had to withdraw from Saturday's match, having only played once in this year's tournament.

He reported "soreness" after the game against Royal Challengers Bangalore eight days ago and has not been involved in full practice since.

Ben Langley, who was until recently the ECB's head of science and medicine, now has a similar role at Mumbai and will remain in dialogue with Rob Key, the ECB's director of cricket, throughout the tournament.

It was a weekend of concerns for England, with Ben Stokes also missing the match for Chennai with a sore heel. The England Test captain went into this year's tournament with concerns about his right knee, which had caused him considerable pain during England's most recent Test tour to New Zealand, but the 31-year-old has insisted that it is something which he can manage. Stokes wants to be able to contribute with both bat and ball against the Australians this summer.

With the five-match Ashes series only two months away, England will be nervously keeping an eye on their seam-bowling options. With the IPL running until the end of May, it is probable that Archer will feature in the four-day Test against Ireland at Lord's at the beginning of June but, beyond that, his red-ball outings before the Ashes may be limited to one LV= County Championship match for Sussex.

Last month, Archer said that even playing one match in the Ashes this year would be a "bonus" and it is far from guaranteed that the bowler will feature in the series at all.

Meanwhile, James Anderson and Stuart Broad both sat out this opening round of County Championship matches, for Lancashire and Nottinghamshire respectively. The veteran duo are set to return for their counties within the next two weeks and are likely to play in three of the first six rounds of County Championship matches as preparation for the Test summer.

More of a surprise was the absence of Ollie Robinson from Sussex's match against Durham at Hove. Paul Farbrace, Sussex's director of cricket, had said that Robinson, 29, would also play in three of the first six games, starting with this opening match, but it is understood that in conjunction with the ECB, it was decided to delay his return by a week.

67
Days until day one of the first Ashes Test begins at Edgbaston on June 16



Archer missed Mumbai's match as a precaution

C A Ingram b Khan 16
K S Carlson c Taylor b T J Price 1
W T Root not out 39
Extras (b 4, lb 4, nb 4) 12
Total (3 wkts, 37 overs) 110
Fall of wickets 1-6, 2-35, 3-38.
Bowling Price 5-0-21-2; Khan 16-2-41-1; de Lange 6-1-23-0; van Buuren 4-1-4-0; Price 3-0-8-0; Taylor 2-0-5-0; Harris 1-1-0-0.
Umpires: M Newell and S J O'Shaughnessy

Sussex v Durham
Hove (final day of four): Sussex (21pts) beat Durham (6) by two wickets
Durham: First Innings 376 (M A Jones 87; A Z Lees 79; N J McAndrew 5 for 85)
Second Innings 189 (O G Robinson 58; F J Hudson-Prentice 4 for 27; H T Crocombe 4 for 47)

Sussex: First Innings 335 (C A Pujara 115)
Second Innings (overnight 172-5)
S F Hunt c Robinson b Carse 14
†O J Carter not out 33
F J Hudson-Prentice c McKinney b Kuhnemann 6
N J McAndrew st Robinson b Kuhnemann 1
J J Carson not out 0
Extras (lb 9, w 8) 17
Total (8 wkts, 67 overs) 232
Fall of wickets 1-30, 2-107, 3-109, 4-166, 5-166, 6-193, 7-202, 8-208.
Bowling Potts 19-2-87-0; Raine 10-3-28-1; Carse 14-3-38-3; Kuhnemann 24-5-70-4.
Umpires: B V Taylor and J D Middlebrook

Yorkshire v Leicestershire
Headingley Carnegie (final day of four): Leicestershire (22pts) beat Yorkshire (7) by three wickets
Yorkshire: First Innings 517 (D J Malan 132; F J Bean 118; M E Milnes 75)
Second Innings (overnight 220-4)
†S D Hope c Patel b Hull 83
G C H Hill c Ackermann b Wright 67
J A Thompson c Ahmed b Hull 13
M L Revis not out 22
D M Bess c Handscomb b Finan 2
M E Milnes not out 15
Extras (lb 6nb 12) 18
Total (8 wkts dec, 54 overs) 286
Fall of wickets 1-0, 2-26, 3-29, 4-125, 5-220, 6-236, 7-260, 8-263.
Bowling Finan 12-0-59-2; Wright 9-2-52-2; Hull 8-0-68-3; Ahmed 14-1-67-1; Ackermann 11-1-34-0.

Leicestershire: First Innings 415 (P S P Handscomb 112; R Ahmed 85; C N Ackermann 67; C J C Wright 66 not out)
Second Innings
R K Patel c Hope b Coad 125
S G Budinger c Thompson b Bess 41
*L J Hill c Hope b Bess 3
C N Ackermann lbw b Bess 72
†P S P Handscomb not out 68
P W A Mulder c Thompson b Bess 11
R Ahmed st Hope b Bess 10
M G Finan c Bean b Milnes 5
C J C Wright not out 40
Extras (b 2, lb 10, w 5) 17
Total (7 wkts, 85.5 overs) 392
Fall of wickets 1-80, 2-88, 3-201, 4-269, 5-298, 6-318, 7-327.
Bowling Coad 14-5-55-1; Milnes 12-0-62-1; Thompson 11.5-2-58-0; Bess 32-1-158-5; Revis 5-0-21-0; Hill 11-4-26-0.
Umpires: B J Debenham and P R Pollard

	P	W	L	D	Bat	Bwl	Pts
Leicestershire	1	1	0	0	3	3	22
Worcestershire	1	1	0	0	3	3	22
Sussex	1	1	0	0	2	3	21
Glamorgan	1	0	0	1	4	3	12
Gloucestershire	1	0	0	1	0	3	8
Yorkshire	1	0	1	0	5	2	7
Durham	1	0	1	0	3	3	6
Derbyshire	1	0	1	0	2	3	5

Cycling

Paris-Roubaix
(Compiegne-Roubaix, 256.6 km) 1, M van der Poel (Neth, Alpecin-Deceuninck) 5hr 28min 41sec; 2, J Philipsen (Bel, Alpecin-Deceuninck) at 46sec; 3, W Van Aert (Bel, Jumbo-Visma) same time; 4, M Pedersen (Den, Trek-Segafredo) at 50sec; 5, S Kung (Switz, Groupama-FDJ; 6, F Ganna (It, Ineos Grenadiers) same time; 7, J Degenkolb (Ger, Team DSM) at 2min 35sec; 8, M Walscheid (Ger, Cofidis) at 3min 31sec; 9, L Rex (Bel, Intermarche-Circus-Wanty) at 3min 35sec; 10, C Laporte (Fr, Jumbo-Visma) at 4min 11sec.

Rugby League

Betfred Super League
Leeds 18 Huddersfield 17
Leeds: Tries: Handley, McDonnell, Martin, C Smith. **Goal:** Martin. **Huddersfield: Tries:** McGillvary, McQueen 2. **Goals:** Connor 3.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	Pts
Warrington	8	8	0	0	252	96	16
Wigan	8	6	0	2	206	85	12
C Dragons	8	6	0	2	192	128	12
Hull KR	8	5	0	3	192	120	10
St Helens	7	4	0	3	138	89	8
Salford	8	4	0	4	178	163	8
Leeds	8	4	0	4	149	161	8
Huddersfield	7	3	0	4	127	94	6
Leigh	8	3	0	5	136	181	6
Castleford	8	2	0	6	90	200	4
Hull	8	2	0	6	108	264	4
Wakefield	8	0	0	8	47	234	0

Rugby union

Heineken Champions Cup quarter-finals
Exeter 42 Stormers 17
Exeter: Tries: Wyatt, J Nowell, Woodburn, S Simmonds, Yeandle, Cairns. **Cons:** J Simmonds 6. **Stormers: Tries:** Willemse, Hartzenberg, Orie. **Con:** Libbok. **HT:** 21-0.
Toulouse 54 Sharks 20
Toulouse: Tries: Mallia 2, Ramos 2, Mauvaka, Retiere, Ntamack. **Cons:** Ramos 5. **Pens:** Ramos 3. **Sharks: Tries:** Williams, Chamberlain. **Cons:** Bosch 2. **Pens:** Bosch 2. **HT:** 14-10.
Leinster 55 Leicester 24
Leinster: Tries: Ringrose 2, Gibson-Park, R Byrne, Penny, J O'Brien, McKee. **Cons:** R Byrne 5, H Byrne. **Pens:** R Byrne 2. **Leicester: Tries:** Watson, Cracknell, Potter. **Cons:** Pollard 2, Gopperth. **Pen:** Pollard. **HT:** 17-10.
La Rochelle 24 Saracens 10
La Rochelle: Tries: Kerr Barlow 2. **Con:** Hastoy. **Pens:** Hastoy 4. **Saracens: Try:** Mawi. **Con:** Farrell. **Pen:** Farrell. **HT:** 16-3.

Challenge Cup quarter-finals
Benetton 27 Cardiff Rugby 23
Benetton Treviso: Tries: Smith, Lamaro, Watson. **Cons:** Umaga 2, Albornoz. **Pens:** Umaga 2. **Cardiff Rugby: Tries:** Young, Grady. **Cons:** Priestland 2. **Pens:** Priestland 3. **HT:** 13-10.
Glasgow 31 Lions 21
Glasgow: Tries: Dempsey, Dobie, Z Fagerson, Jordan. **Cons:** G Horne 4. **Pen:** G Horne. **Lions: Tries:** Nohamba, F Horn, Brandon. **Cons:** Nohamba, Lombard 2. **HT:** 14-0.
Toulon 48 Lyon 23
Toulon: Tries: Wainiqolo 2, Baubigny, Priso Mouangue, Nayacalevu Vuidravuwalu, Ollivon, Luc. **Cons:** West 4, Biggar. **Pen:** West. **Lyon: Tries:** Couilloud, Arnold. **Cons:** Berdeu 2. **Pens:** Sopoaga 3. **HT:** 20-6.
Scarlets 32 Clermont 30
Scarlets: Tries: Halfpenny, Costelow, J Williams, Conbeer. **Cons:** Halfpenny, Costelow 2. **Pens:** Halfpenny, Costelow. **Clermont: Tries:** Simone, Raka 2, Beria . **Cons:** Belleau, Plisson. **Pens:** Belleau 2. **HT:** 22-18.

RFU Championship
Ampthill 21 Coventry 45; Doncaster 24 Jersey Reds 52.

	P	W	D	L	F	A	B	Pts
Ealing	19	17	0	2	791	312	19	87
Jersey Reds	19	17	1	1	716	344	15	85
Coventry	19	14	1	4	630	462	15	73
Bedford	19	11	0	8	626	523	17	61
Cornish P	19	10	0	9	441	462	8	48
Doncaster	19	9	0	10	500	527	10	46
Hartpury RFC	19	9	0	10	445	512	9	45
Ampthill	19	8	1	10	470	511	11	45
Caldy	19	7	0	12	418	575	11	39
Nottingham	19	6	0	13	466	597	12	36
Richmond	19	3	1	15	323	657	6	20
London Scot	19	1	0	18	328	672	9	13

Tennis

ATP Millennium Estoril Open
Final: C Ruud (Nor) bt M Kecmanovic (Serbia) 6-2, 7-6 (7-3).
ATP Grand Prix Hassan II
Marrakech: Final R Carballes Baena (Sp) bt A Muller (Fr) 4-6, 7-6 (7-3), 6-2.
ATP Monte-Carlo Masters
First round: N Jarry (Chile) bt B Coric (Cro) 6-2, 6-3; J Munar (Sp), M Huesler (Switz) 7-6 (7-3), 4-6, 6-4; H Hurkacz (Pol) bt L Djere (Serbia) 6-4 (5-7), 7-6 (7-5), 7-6 (7-5).
WTA Copa Colsanitas
Bogota: Final: T MAria (Ger) bt P Stearns (US) 6-3, 2-6, 6-4.

Saracens run into 'La Machine' and dream is crushed





Itoje carries the fight to La Rochelle but is brought to a halt by Reda Wardi, while

La Rochelle	24
Saracens	10

Alex Lowe Rugby Correspondent

In the nine years since he joined La Rochelle, Levani Botia has become a cult hero in these parts, revered as *La Machine* because of his strength and remarkable versatility, having played for the club at centre, on the wing and in the back row. There were times here, as the great Fijian laid waste to Saracens' Heineken Champions Cup ambitions, when it seemed as though he was playing all three at once.

Botia, 34, was wearing No7 but he was everywhere. The former prison guard had the keys to the Saracens breakdown, winning a handful of turnovers on his own before capping a superb individual display with an assist for Tawera Kerr-Barlow's second try, which sealed victory for La Rochelle.

It was his final contribution. Botia was serenaded by 16,000 flag-waving supporters as he left the arena with La Rochelle, the reigning European champions who are bound for a "home" semi-final in Bordeaux against Exeter Chiefs.

"We can be destructive on both sides of the ball," Ronan O'Gara, La Rochelle's head coach, said as his players warmed up on the field, among them the colossal figures of Jonathan Danty, Uini Atonio, Will Skelton, Grégory Alldritt and Botia, who is only 6ft tall but a ball of muscle and dynamism.

With La Rochelle also protecting an unbeaten home record in the Champions Cup that stretched back to 2019, Saracens felt the full force of that physicality in the opening exchanges.

They conceded four penalties in the opening five minutes, with Alldritt leading the early La Rochelle ground

Champions Cup semi-finals

April 29
Leinster v Toulouse *3pm*
April 30
La Rochelle v Exeter Chiefs *4pm*

Scorers: La Rochelle: Tries Kerr-Barlow (33min, 58). **Con** Hastoy. **Pens** Hastoy 4 (1, 4, 23, 68). **Saracens: Try** Mawi (65). **Con** Farrell. **Pen** Farrell (21).
La Rochelle B Dulin (sin-bin 72); R Rhule, U Seuteni, J Danty (T Thomas 68), J Favre; A Hastoy, T Kerr-Barlow (T Berjon 70); R Wardi (H Thompson-Stringer 57), P Bourgarit (Q Lespiaucq 43), U Atonio (J Sclavi 57), T Lavault (R Sazy 65), W Skelton (U Dillane 76), U Dillane (R Bourdeau 65), L Botia (Y Tanga 60), G Alldritt (Y Tanga 46-56).
Saracens A Goode (A Lewington 65); M Malins, A Lozowski, N Tompkins (D Taylor 60), S Maitland (J George 77); O Farrell, I van Zyl (R De Haas 76); M Vunipola (E Mawi 61), J George (T Woolstencroft 61; sin-bin 76), M Riccioni, M Itoje, H Tizard (C Hunter-Hill 68), N Isiekwe, B Earl, B Vunipola (J Wray 21).
Referee Andrew Brace (Ire).
Attendance 16,000.

assault as the home side rapidly opened up a 6-0 lead. It would have been 9-0 had Antoine Hastoy, the fly half, not hit a post with his third shot at goal.

Saracens had to arrest the momentum. They did so, first by forcing a knock-on from Alldritt and then by winning a canny scrum penalty, which Owen Farrell kicked to touch. For ten minutes, Saracens were camped in La Rochelle territory, Maro Itoje was carrying with purpose and they eked out a penalty, which Farrell kicked.

But Billy Vunipola, one of those who could match his opponents in the power stakes, injured a knee during the same passage of play and was carried from the field on a stretcher. In his sizeable absence, La Rochelle resumed their dominance.

Botia was a menace, floating around behind the front line of La Rochelle's defence, then pouncing to isolate the tackled player and win three turnover penalties in quick succession, the second of which allowed Hastoy to restore the six-point advantage.

Almost offended by conceding that early scrum penalty, La Rochelle grew in ascendancy at the set piece during the first half, putting Saracens under pressure twice, then drawing two free kicks, with Jamie George warned by Andrew Brace, the referee, about his brake foot at the scrum.

Saracens kept coming, desperate to play with pace and keep the ball alive to stay out of Botia's clutches, with Max Malins making a couple of breaks. But the pressure eventually told as La Rochelle engineered the opening try beautifully, building from deep, with carries from Raymond Rhule and Pierre Bourgarit before Hastoy arrowed a flat pass out to Ultan Dillane.

La Rochelle were now on the march forward and Alldritt drew two defenders before dropping the pass back to Kerr-Barlow, the scrum half, who looped around his No8 and straightened through an inviting hole in the Saracens defence to touch down.

Saracens had a fingertip intervention at a lineout from Nick Isiekwe to thank for not being further behind at half-time, but a 16-3 deficit was too great to bridge. Mark McCall's men fought hard and Itoje was outstanding, carrying well and competing for his own share of turnovers on the floor, but Botia was on another level. In one remarkable movement he tackled Jackson Wray, bounced to his feet and crabbed over the No8 to win a breakdown penalty.

Nick Tompkins, the Saracens centre, was swallowed up by yellow jerseys as the visitors tried to force their way over the tryline, which delighted the crowd. The fans urged Atonio back to his feet, chanting the name of the tight-head prop as he received treatment, and he duly rose to win a key scrum penalty that relieved the pressure.

Botia switched into centre mode for the decisive attack. By shaping to pass to Danty on his outside, he fixed Farrell and Sean Maitland before cutting back inside, accelerating away and sending Kerr-Barlow over for the try.

Eroni Mawi burrowed over for a consolation score for Saracens. The game finished 14-a-side, as Brice Dulin was sent to the sin-bin for a high tackle on Alex Lewington and was swiftly joined by Tom Woolstencroft, the Saracens hooker, for a dangerous clear-out that appeared to knock out Skelton. Saracens must now return their focus to winning the Gallagher Premiership.

"We had a lesson today on how precise you need to be to play against one of the best teams in Europe," McCall, their director of rugby, said.

"If you're going to go against Botia, then you need to be outstanding. He was phenomenal today. We conceded eight penalties for holding on. That gave them early points and it plagued us the whole game."

Toulouse prove winning rugby doesn't need to be brutal

Stuart Barnes



Is anyone else desperately tired of hearing the question over and over again: "Would you let your children play rugby?" It has been branded a dangerous sport, one in which the risks of serious injuries outweigh the rewards. And, let us be honest, not without plenty of justification.

The sport has evolved through its first quarter century-plus of professionalism into a brutal battle. It was always physical but the capacity of coaches to get their players into the gym and make monsters of them was too great. Structures were created — we call them game plans — to maximise physique.

Defences grew in both size and organisation. From the primitive past of backs being horizontal as they made the tackle, to the upright bodies that stood firm when the giants ran straight at them. The "double tackle" is one where three heads — the attacker and two defenders — are all within close proximity. It does seem to take a certain type to support the evolution of rugby union.

Size, structure, solidity are the key words and, whatever you do, don't push the boundaries of what is possible, or rather, permissible.

Last Monday's column was a paean to a Gloucester side encouraged to break out of their chains and structure, and play what is in front of them. The element of surprise almost caught La Rochelle, the European Champions, cold.

Like a whisper in the wind, we saw what was possible. One week later, the potential for rugby's poetic side was revealed to dazzling effect in Toulouse as they (and Sharks for 50 minutes) tore apart the unsmiling gods of the cautious game plan in their Heineken Champions Cup quarter-final on Saturday.

Territory, the greatest of all the rugby commandments for so many risk-averse coaches, was set aside. Thomas Ramos — redefining the role of full back as the second fly half — acts on what he sees. Whether it is within his own in-goal area or the opposing half, he reacts to space in the same way.

Space, the well-drilled conservative coaches tell us, has been closed down by 23 super-fit athletes, allied with the rise of the defence coach. It is the negative mindset of an age where the wrong way was taken long ago. There is space, huge amounts of it, all over the pitch, and there is now hope.

Toulouse are the missionaries spreading the word of a movement that Pierre Villepreux formulated in the 1980s and made official as a coaching charter in 1997.

Le Plaisir du Mouvement is, quite literally, a coaching philosophy. It fuels Villepreux's old club and is an essential ingredient in the rise of the French national team. Fabien Galthié, playing for the highest stakes as the France head coach, sometimes believes that the Toulouse core of his team can overplay the free-thinking qualities of "the movement". It is about the right way to play, not win at all costs.

The coaching creed espouses "movement, open game, flexibility, not organisation". To the sport's high priests of coaching, this is as much of a threat as Martin Luther's 95 *Theses* were to the Catholic Church in the 16th century. Its aim is to liberate the individual from the all-enveloping structure, to "allow him/her to always better respond with accuracy and efficiency to the multiple game situations". Sad to say that some of the most fêted players in England cannot respond in anything but the premeditated way to those "multiple game situations".

Rugby is sport. It should be pleasurable for players and fans alike, as it is when Toulouse — with a team brimming with French internationals — unload. They have the perfect blend of forwards who stay on their feet and offload, other forwards who support either side of the carriers, and backs throwing 20-metre passes across their own tryline — not for the fun of it but because opposing coaches cannot conceive of a side running from such a risky position. Game planners are goners.

What Toulouse reminded us during their 54-20 win against Sharks is that there is no risk if the players can

BAPTISTE FERNANDEZ/GETTY IMAGES



12
La Rochelle have won their past 12 European home matches, with their most recent loss against Glasgow Warriors in December 2019

Vunipola, inset, receives treatment for a knee injury that forced him off the field

CONTINUED FROM BACK
England blow for Vunipola

Borthwick took over from Eddie Jones as head coach. Alex Dombrandt played at No 8 throughout the Six Nations but he has not nailed down the position.

Sam Simmonds and Lewis Ludlam are other options in the role. Zach Mercer, who is joining Gloucester from Montpellier next season, will be eligible for World Cup selection, so too will Tom Willis. The former Wasps No 8 has been in impressive form since joining Bordeaux Bègles and has been signed by Saracens for next season.

Saracens must now switch their focus to winning a first Gallagher Premiership title since 2019. They are top of the regular-season table and have already secured a home semi-final. "I'm pleased we have the luxury of that as we need to look after some bodies," McCall said. "We have five weeks to learn all the things we need to from today's game ahead of that semi-final."

– it can be beautiful

identify the space that — according to the coaching orthodoxy — no longer exists and possess the skills to make the play. The French team force the quicker-witted defences to push the wings flatter, opening acres of wide-open space to launch spectacular and crowd-pleasing counterattacks.

Antoine Dupont and Ramos will readily kick when defenders are forced into the defensive line as the space shifts from wide out to behind the gainline. Not only are there still vast swathes of space on a professional rugby field, but these spaces are there to be manipulated by the attacking side.

The semi-final against Leinster on April 28 promises to be one of the greatest and most important matches of the professional era. Toulouse are carrying the banner for those who remain convinced that the fluidity of the rugby field belongs to the team with individuals coached to see the opportunities, to act efficiently and win the battle for space and, with it, the match.

Leinster and Ireland are diametric opposites to that. They have taken structural rugby to a new level, allowing individuals to make a number of choices. It is an exciting, intelligent and winning brand of union.

If Toulouse can overcome Leinster's home advantage and multi-optioned game, we may all be advocating the pleasure of movement in rugby, rather than the simplicity of structure. Ireland and Leinster, it must be reiterated, have more sophisticated structures than the inflexible game plan that has haunted the professional game.

This is more than simply a clash of two wonderful teams; it is an ideological collision. I will not be against Leinster but I will most definitely be for Toulouse.

Mickelson proves he needs big stage, not big money, to get his juices flowing again



David Walsh
Augusta

ROSS KINNAIRD/GETTY IMAGES





A beaming Mickelson walks up the 18th last night after rekindling memories of his first Green Jacket win in 2004, inset, following a challenging few months

Phil Mickelson had spoken all week about how well he was playing. Not many paid attention because golfers are apt to talk up their games and mistake what they do on the range for the real thing. When Mickelson then shot 75 in the third round, it seemed safe to think that was it from the three-times Masters champion.

While we sit in the press room writing him off, Mickelson is waiting in the corridor, practising his chipping and doing his stretching exercises. He is different.

Fifty-two years young, Mickelson smiled as he walked off the 18th green after his final round and had every right to do so. His 65 was the lowest recorded by a player over 50 in the history of this tournament. It was the best round of the day and confirmation that he was not exaggerating when saying he was on the cusp of playing as well as he had 20 years before.

He began his final round ten shots behind the tournament leader, Brooks Koepka, so far back that those high up on the leaderboard would not have noticed him, let alone considered him a threat. As he walked jauntily to the recorder's hut to sign for his 65, Mickelson was not just the leader in the clubhouse but his eight-under total was not going to bettered by many.

Two years ago, Mickelson became the oldest player in golf history to win a major when taking the PGA Championship at Kiawah Island. At the time that seemed a wonderful climax to an extraordinary career and also the perfect swansong. When Mickelson accepted a reported $200 million in return for a four-year commitment to the rival LIV Tour, the game's oldest star was leveraging his name and past achievements in return for a fortune.

Mickelson has not played well in the LIV tournaments. How could he? He is the performer who needs the grand stage, who needs to be in a tournament that has the world's attention. The Masters is his kind of place, the Green Jacket his kind of prize and where else was he going to remind us that he still has it?

He made eight birdies and one bogey in his 65 on a day when so many others faltered. Koepka, the leader going into the final round, needed 13 holes to make his first birdie and he would make a multitude of bogeys. Mickelson was pretty

Mickelson's fourth round

Par | Birdie | Bogey

Hole	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	Total
Par	4	5	4	3	4	3	4	5	4	4	4	3	5	4	5	3	4	4	72
P Mickelson	4	4	4	3	5	2	3	5	4	4	4	2	4	4	4	3	3	3	65

pleased with his day's work. "No matter the outcome," he said after signing for his score, "I had so much fun today.

"I feel like I've been hitting these types of quality shots, but I have not been staying focused and present for the upcoming shot, and I make a lot of mistakes. Kind of like you saw on Thursday, and that cost me a bunch of strokes. To come out today and play the way I did and hit the shots when I needed, it's so much fun. I'm grateful to be a part of this tournament and to be here competing, and to play well means a lot."

65
Mickelson's final round of 65 was the lowest score by a player aged 50 or older in the history of the Masters

How can a 52-year-old play this well? What is obvious is his physical condition. He says he is back to his student weight when at Arizona State and it is clear too he works assiduously on both his strength and flexibility. We might be tempted to see this as another glorious swansong but not him.

"Today is hopefully a stepping stone to really kick-start the rest of the year and continue some great play because I have a unique opportunity. At 52, no physical injuries, no physical problems, being able to swing a club the way I want to, to do things in the game that not many people have had a chance to do later in life.

"I've kind of really worked hard in the off-season to get in shape, to get ready for this upcoming season, and I'm out there hitting shots and not scoring. So it's been frustrating. Today was really a fun day. Hopefully I'll be able to use this again as a springboard for the rest of the year."

This Masters week began with much of the conversation centred on Tiger Woods and how he would cope with the physical challenge of Augusta National. How could his injured body survive the rigours of four days on an undulating course? Woods, everyone agreed, was someone that could not be written off. Halfway through, the grind proved too much for his ailing body and he withdrew.

No one spoke of Mickelson. No one said he was a player that could not be written off. Coming down the stretch in his final round, Mickelson had got to six-under par and then played magical approaches to both the 17th and 18th greens, setting up two further birdies. All he needed were a few more holes. We may have been surprised. He wasn't.

"This doesn't feel like a fluke," he added. "It wasn't like I hit shots I haven't been hitting. I stayed present and didn't make loose swings or those bad swings at an inopportune time. I stayed very present and calm throughout, then executed and had a blast."

Rahm's show of quality sees

Rick Broadbent
Augusta



Jon Rahm had started this Masters by remembering the words of his idol Seve Ballesteros after taking four putts on the very first green. "I miss, I miss, I miss, I make," he repeated as a reminder that there was a long way to go. On the longest day and what would have been his compatriot's 66th birthday, he made his mark in history.

The Spaniard's second major came about on a marathon Masters Sunday in which he and Brooks Koepka slugged it out over 30 holes straddling two rounds. The burly Rahm finished strongly to dent Koepka's career revival after injury and prevent Greg Norman claiming an LIV Golf victory. Norman had vowed that his Saudi tour players would storm the green if one of them won, but Rahm's quality meant Augusta National was spared that, albeit that Phil Mickelson deserves a hug or a raise after coming close to one of the most unlikely sporting stories of them all.

Rahm's round of 69 gave him an ultimately comfortable four-stroke victory over Koepka, with Mickelson another stroke back, and the champion succumbed to the emotion after a disrupted tournament had threatened an extraordinary finish.

In a swirling maelstrom of a tournament like no other, with a backdrop of golfing civil war between the PGA Tour and LIV Golf, who should rise up the leaderboard but that old provocateur? Yes, enter the man who had missed last year's Masters over the furore of his words about playing off "Saudi motherf***ers" against his old paymasters.

As Rahm tried to hold on to his lead and Koepka tried to cling on with mounting desperation, the man in black lit up Augusta National. A round of 65, eight birdies and occasional brilliance lifted the 52-year-old into second place alongside Koepka. He was eight under in the clubhouse and Rahm was only two shots clear at that point, but not at his peerless best.

Rahm, though, has a granitic core to go with the shot-making ability and he had one arm in the Green Jacket when he arrowed a superb iron from the right of the 14th fairway to four feet. Having started the longest day four shots behind Koepka it was the dagger to the heart. The writing was on the wall and the name all but on the honours board as he moved four clear.

Mickelson, who saw off Koepka to become the oldest major winner at the US PGA Championship two years ago, could be satisfied with his lowest score at the Masters since Tiger Woods was an amateur and becoming the second player after Sam Snead to make the top three in four different decades.

His move sent shockwaves around the course. His playing partner, Jordan Spieth, had nine birdies to get to seven under by the end and was quick to defend the presence of Mickelson and the 12 LIV Golf players who made the final round. "I've always said that you shouldn't keep somebody out if they qualified," he said. How good had he been? "I was just trying to match Phil shot for shot," he said.

Mickelson may have become a controversial figure but the stunned Augusta crowd reacted as if his rise through younger, fêted names was akin to raising the Titanic. And if you birdie the last two holes at Augusta you deserve credit, however grudging.

At the start of this marathon Masters Sunday, with players having to return early to complete their third rounds after the rain suspension the previous day, Koepka was at 13 under, four strokes clear of Rahm and brimming with old-Brooks brio. After they finished off the first of their 30 greens, that lead was down to two. By the time they had finished their third rounds, Koepka had shown the hint of fragility with three bogeys in one morning compared with the one he had let slip in the previous 42 holes. It was a sign of things to come.

Rahm, then, started the final round trying to close a tangible two-stroke deficit. Telling Koepka that the lead had been halved did not go well.

"What do you mean halved?" he said before setting out. "I started yesterday at two. I'm just spitting facts to you." Indeed, this was the spitting-blood Koepka, the one with the chip on his shoulder, the one who won four majors between 2017 and 2019. It was another effort to debunk the idea that LIV Golf is an exhibition circuit that would blunt competitive edges. Alternatively, it should have been no surprise that a man playing a three-round circuit was leading after 54 holes.

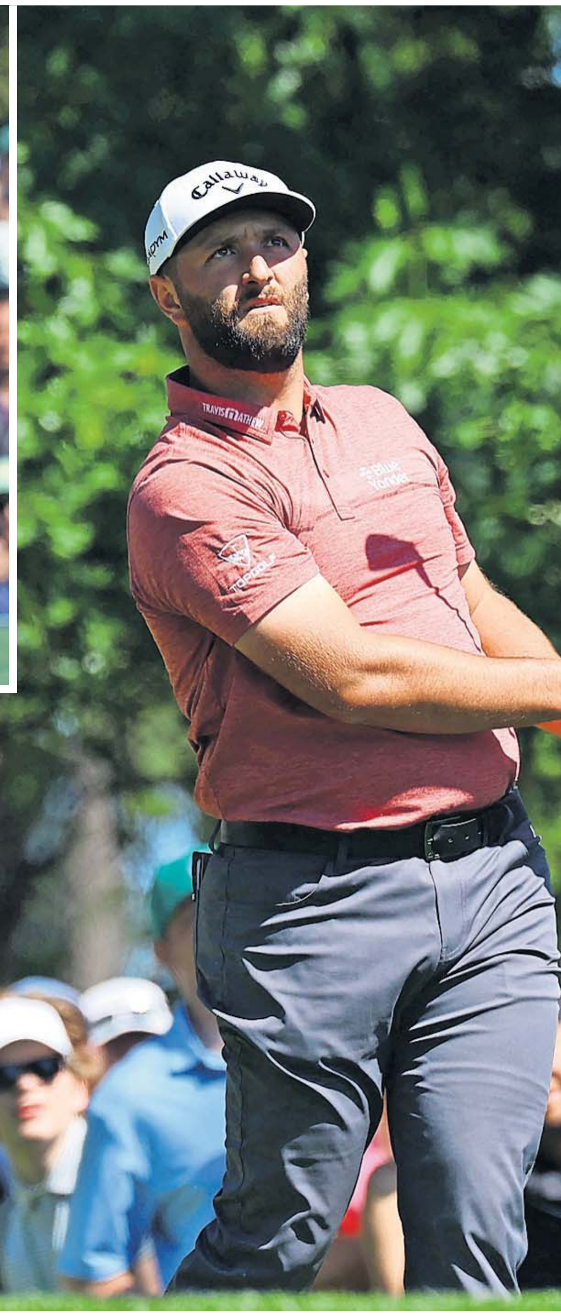
After Viktor Hovland reduced his own eight-stroke gap to three thanks to a run of five consecutive birdies as he finished his third round, we settled down to the main event. Trees had fallen, Woods had departed and the sun finally restored Augusta National to its verdant Sunday best.

The pressure of trying to close in on a major is one of the great unseen challenges. Koepka has been blighted by injuries since he was a major-munching leviathan, and this was always going to be a daunting test of nerve and sinew. Rahm, another man who has been the world No 1 and the 2021 US Open champion to boot, was ready to rattle any insecurities.

Both made early errors but the first telling one came on the 4th, when Koepka missed a 12-foot putt, the sort of distance he excelled at in his pomp. Rahm had made one from a similar range on the previous hole and, suddenly, the protagonists were all square.

On the par-three 6th Koepka missed the green and his difficult chip flew past. A bogey followed and Rahm was ahead. As they headed to the turn he







Sporting theatre lays bare damage done by civil war

Owen Slot in Augusta says this is the golf we want to see, but LIV split means it is now sole preserve of the majors



Golf reunited. That was the Masters this week. The best golfers in the world against the best golfers in the world — not a bad concept for a golf tour, right? Jon Rahm and Brooks Koepka going head-to-head in a duel that endured two enthralling rounds, heavyweight versus heavyweight trading blows until Koepka, finally, lay flat on the canvas. Two world-class athletes at the top of their game, raw, relentless, proper gritty sport of the highest calibre. Wouldn't it be neat if this could catch on?

Rewind to the 1st tee yesterday afternoon. Koepka pulls his drive way left. He did that twice in the morning when completing the third round, but this one is even worse; it's so far right that it trickles through on to the 9th fairway. Is it already getting to him? Is the final-day pressure and the lead of the Masters worming its way into his mind and down his arms into his ability to release his driver with the same rotation and timing that had dominated in Augusta all week?

Rahm then has the chance to capitalise, but he cannot land the blow and Koepka then somehow scrambles his par. "You can't touch me, Jon." At least that is what he would have said if he had exchanged a sentence with the Spaniard. I've followed this pair for two days now and only once did I see them share even a word. And I may be mistaken there; that might have been Rahm talking to his caddie.

Koepka's body language and ice-cold focus is spell-binding. It's something to do with those slouchy I've-got-no-worries shoulders. He plays like there is no one else in the game. Yesterday, Rahm was digging in for his personal battle to persuade his opponent that wasn't the case, just to spark some kind of self-doubt in Koepka's mind. And is that exactly what you were looking for, when Koepka lips out on the 2nd?

"It's important to be in the final pairing, the closest pursuer," Rahm had said between rounds three and four. He is right up close and testing him now.

Koepka? He hadn't seemed particularly triggered by the wrestling contest from which they were taking brief respite. "I feel fine," he said, between rounds three and four. "I'm just going about me. That's it." Just about me, that's how it looks to be Brooks Koepka.

He was also asked: "What's your confidence level going into this final round?" And his answer was also very much in character: "It's pretty good. How could you not be, right?" He half-smiled. Was that a foolish question? Or is it just that people don't get what it's like being me.

off the rebel uprising

MIKE SEGAR/REUTERS



Rahm reeled in Koepka, below, during a tense final round at Augusta, as Mickelson, inset, rolled back the years

needed a tourniquet and the bleeding to stop.

Another subplot was bubbling under. Koepka and his caddie had both faced questions from rules officials over whether they had signalled what club they had used to playing partner Gary Woodland and his caddie on the opening day. When Woodland, the 2019 US Open champion, rose to outright third, the Green Jackets were no doubt urging on Rahm. Matt Fitzpatrick toiled as is his manner and finished at a creditable four under, alongside Scottie Scheffler. Sam Bennett, the US Amateur champion, began yesterday in a third-round trio with Rahm and Koepka but faded. In among all the frenzy, falls, revivals and yearning for the Green Jacket, he was able to provide true perspective. He tees off at 8.30 am today in his next college competition.

Woods pulls out before final day to raise fresh doubts over his future

Rick Broadbent

Watching Tiger Woods's topographical torture at a place that is often regarded as a golfing paradise shows the scale of the task facing a man who wants to tilt at titles but is restricted to windmills.

His fight against the taunt of time and self-inflicted injuries from the 85mph car crash of 2021 is a triumph of ambition but little else. As young men scrapped for the crown, Woods was already out of the Masters.

He had made a record-equalling 23rd-consecutive cut, but it surprised absolutely no one when he pulled out before the final day. With the rain-suspended third round having to be completed before the fourth, Woods faced the prospect of playing 29 holes yesterday.

Given he had played 72 competitive ones in about nine months, it was a daunting task for a man who was struggling horribly by the close on Saturday. Back-to-back double bogeys for the first time in a Masters career of nigh-on 2,000 shots were embarrassing. He was six over through the seven holes of his third round. The rain came out. The towel went in.



There was a smidgeon of good news for those who still believe he can get back and compete for a 16th major. "I am disappointed to have to WD this morning due to re-aggravating my plantar fasciitis," he tweeted.

That is a painful condition affecting the heel and underside of the foot, but it can be cured with a long period of rest. His damaged leg will not get better, although there have been small signs of improvement there. He can now squat down on his haunches to read a putt, which was not the case last summer. Yet it is undeniable that he is also in denial.

Woods was struggling horribly before rain ended play early on Saturday

It is only a month until the next major at the US PGA Championship and that must now be in doubt.

A record number of cuts is a trivial accolade for him and he has a future in golf, though probably not the one he wants. Woods says he will only play on if he feels he can win. He has an insatiable competitiveness that cannot be satisfied by ceremonial status.

When he made his latest comeback at the Genesis Invitational in February, he said: "I would not have put myself out here if I didn't think I could beat these guys." He had rounds of 69 and 67 and came 45th. That was better than Jordan Spieth and Matt Fitzpatrick, but it was 16 shots worse than the winner, Jon Rahm.

A year ago at the Masters, he said the same. "If I feel like I can win, I'm going to play," he said. "If I feel like I can't, you won't see me out here."

His Masters win in 2019, after all the back surgeries and 11 years without a major, was one of sport's greatest comebacks. If he won a 16th it would top it by a distance. He has broken the top 40 on the PGA Tour three times in 3½ years, and never since his car crash. He is 47.

We have reached the stage now where another major would even top Ben Hogan's US Open triumph in 1950 in terms of surprise. Hogan's Cadillac was crunched by a Greyhound bus and he broke his pelvis, ankle, collarbone and rib. Blood clots nearly killed him again and Associated Press sent out an obituary just in case.

At one tournament, Grantland Rice wrote the famous line: "His legs simply were not strong enough to carry his heart." The same now goes for Woods.

Hogan's legs did grow stronger, though, and he won a major 16 months after his near-death experience and then added another five, including his two Green Jackets.

This was the psychodrama of the last day at Augusta, a day so absorbing that you could forget that these were the two leading protagonists in golf's civil war, that Saudi money was ripping the game in two, that each side was so heavily invested in seeing in a winner from their half of the divide: Koepka versus Rahm, LIV versus the establishment.

Then we are back to the fight. Koepka is starting to feel it: bogey on the 4th and then a shocker on the 6th, from the back of the green, a chip that releases and rolls past the pin, on and way out into trouble. Where was his touch of the first three days?

And Rahm isn't giving anything. The blows are starting to land. The Augusta National is riveted.

Thus, amid all this battling for pre-eminence and ownership in the game, there are, here, four clear winners and that is the Masters itself and the other three majors. Their elevated status already set them apart. Now they provide the only platform for golf to stage this kind of thing: the best against the best.

Greg Norman and LIV Golf took that away from the game when they triggered the breakaway last year. The majors bring them back together. And though golfers on both sides of the divide are earning more now that they are locked into their dispute, the game is only the poorer for it.

The most interesting comment on the subject all week came from Koepka after day two when he was asked if his decision to join LIV last year might have been different had he made it when he was in full health and not wondering if his knee injury might never reach the complete recovery that it has now.

"Honestly, yeah, probably, if I'm being completely honest," he said. "I think it would have been." And with that, we heard a doubt in the voice, the first public acknowledgement that maybe the LIV dream isn't all it has been made out to be.

Koepka said that he missed playing against Rahm and the likes of Rory McIlroy. Well, you're not alone, Brooks, especially if yesterday at Augusta is what it looks like: proper sporting competition rather than a money-making exhibition.

The Masters this week has served to demonstrate further the damage that LIV Golf has done to the sport. Koepka's admission that he may not have made the right decision makes you wonder how long this folly will continue. Many are already speculating that there might be a Saudi U-turn.

Golf reunited? I just see these whopping contracts that the LIV players are on and the fact that they are legally unable to extricate themselves from them.

On to the 13th. Rahm is now three shots clear and knocking lumps out of Koepka. And Koepka is really struggling to hang in anywhere close. His second is long, his touch has deserted him. Yet he is fighting, scrambling, looking to grab anything to halt his descent. Somehow he gets up and down and sinks his first birdie for 23 holes.

We are witnessing now a gradual disintegration, one magnificent player trying everything to prevent it and Rahm, foot on his throat, not giving him room to breathe. This has been brilliant theatre; that is how it is when you get the best against the best.

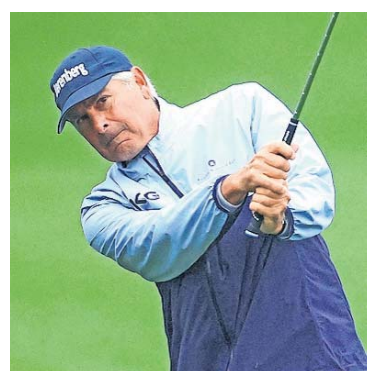
You won't see it again, though, until the next major, the PGA Championship, in six weeks' time. That is what you get when you split the game in two.

Leaderboard

Final scores from Augusta

*US unless stated. *Denotes amateur*

		R1	R2	R3	R4	Total
J Rahm (Sp)	-12	65	69	73	69	276
B Koepka	-8	65	67	73	75	280
P Mickelson	-8	71	69	75	65	280
J Spieth	-7	69	70	76	66	281
P Reed	-7	71	70	72	68	281
R Henley	-7	73	67	71	70	281
V Hovland (Nor)	-6	65	73	70	74	282
C Young	-6	67	72	75	68	282
S Theegala	-5	73	70	73	67	283
S Scheffler	-4	68	75	71	70	284
M Fitzpatrick (Eng)	-4	70	72	72	70	284
X Schauffele	-4	68	74	71	71	284
C Morikawa	-4	69	69	74	72	284
P Cantlay	-3	71	71	68	75	285
G Woodland	-3	68	72	73	72	285
H Matsuyama (Jpn)	-2	71	70	70	75	286
*S Bennett	-2	68	68	76	74	286
S Lowry (Ire)	-2	68	72	73	73	286
J Rose (Eng)	-2	69	71	73	73	286
Im S-J (S Kor)	-2	71	76	67	72	286
J Niemann (Chi)	-2	71	69	74	72	286
Kim J-H (S Kor)	-2	70	72	74	70	286
Lee K-H (S Kor)	-1	74	67	74	72	287
K Bradley	-1	70	72	74	71	287
C Kirk	-1	70	74	72	71	287
R Fox (NZ)	E	70	71	74	73	288
T Finau	E	69	74	73	72	288
S Stallings	E	70	77	69	72	288
S Burns	+1	68	71	78	72	289
Kim S-W (S Kor)	+1	73	72	72	72	289
H Varner III	+1	72	71	76	70	289
M Hughes (Can)	+1	76	69	74	70	289
T Fleetwood (Eng)	+3	72	71	74	74	291
T Gooch	+4	72	74	73	73	292
Z Johnson	+4	75	70	74	73	292
C Smith (Aus)	+4	70	72	75	75	292
T Hatton (Eng)	+4	71	73	72	76	292
J T Poston	+4	74	72	76	70	292
A Scott (Aus)	+5	68	74	77	74	293
A Ancer (Mex)	+5	72	71	74	76	293
T Moore	+5	73	72	70	78	293
J Day (Aus)	+5	67	72	74	80	293
M Pereira (Chi)	+6	74	70	77	73	294
H English	+6	71	71	77	75	294
M Homa	+6	71	73	72	78	294
S Straka (Aut)	+7	70	73	74	78	295
S Power (Ire)	+7	73	72	73	77	295
D Johnson	+8	71	72	78	75	296
T Pieters (Bel)	+8	74	73	72	77	296
C Schwartzel (SA)	+9	74	73	73	77	297
F Couples	+9	71	74	76	76	297
B Horschel	+12	73	74	74	79	300
K Mitchell	+14	75	71	77	79	302



Couples made the Masters cut aged 63

Sport

Rahm wins the Masters

Spaniard claims second major title after superb final round

Pages 53-55



Anfield ‘elbow’ shock

● Assistant referee appears to strike Robertson ● Liverpool fight back to dent Arsenal title hopes

Liverpool	2
Arsenal	2

Paul Joyce

The FA will launch an investigation after the assistant referee, Constantine Hatzidakis, appeared to elbow the Liverpool defender Andrew Robertson during a thrilling 2-2 draw at Anfield which checked Arsenal’s title charge.

Robertson was left touching his chin after the official thrust out his right arm towards the 29-year-old’s face as he approached him at half-time.

Arsenal led 2-0 through strikes by Gabriel Martinelli and Gabriel Jesus before goals from Mohamed Salah — who also missed a penalty — and Roberto Firmino rescued a point for Liverpool. It leaves Arsenal six points clear at the top of the Premier League, although they have played a game more than Manchester City and must visit Pep Guardiola’s side later this month.

The incident involving Hatzidakis will also now be scrutinised by the Professional Game Match Officials Limited (PGMOL). “I didn’t see it,” the Liverpool manager, Jürgen Klopp, said. “I heard the pictures speak for themselves. I cannot say more. I didn’t see a bit of it.”

Robertson was booked by the referee, Paul Tierney, after the flashpoint. The same officials took charge of Liverpool’s draw at Tottenham Hotspur last season, during which the left back was sent off. After that game, Klopp confronted Tierney and claimed he had a personal issue with him.

In a statement, the PGMOL said it was “aware” of the incident, adding: “We will review the matter in full.”

SPORTIMAGE/ALAMY LIVE NEWS; SKY SPORTS



Liverpool’s Robertson clutches his chin after he appeared to be struck by the assistant referee Hatzidakis, inset, at the end of the first half. Full story, The Game, pages 2-4

THE TIMES

thegame

All the action from the weekend

Palace hit five at Elland Road to deepen Leeds’ relegation fears

Gregor Robertson on Hollywood title showdown in National League

Moments to decide a title?

Arsenal blow two-goal lead but it could have been worse after Salah misses penalty and Ramsdale pulls off two superb saves late on to preserve a crucial point for league leaders

No Leicester job for Marsch

Charlotte Duncker

Jesse Marsch is out of the running to replace Brendan Rodgers as the manager of Leicester City.

The American, sacked by Leeds United in February, had been a leading contender for the job after holding talks on Thursday but it is understood that he has withdrawn from the process.

Marsch, 49, is said to have made the decision after watching Leicester lose 1-0 at home to Bournemouth on Saturday, a result which left the club 19th in the Premier League.

Leicester are still considering whether to bring in a temporary manager — such as Rafa Benítez or Sam Allardyce — until the end of the season or stick with the caretakers, Adam Sadler and Mike Stowell.

Rodgers was sacked last week after four years in charge.

The Game, page 11

England blow for Vunipola

Alex Lowe
Rugby Correspondent, La Rochelle

Billy Vunipola’s hopes of earning an England recall for the World Cup suffered a setback yesterday as Saracens were knocked out of the Heineken Champions Cup.

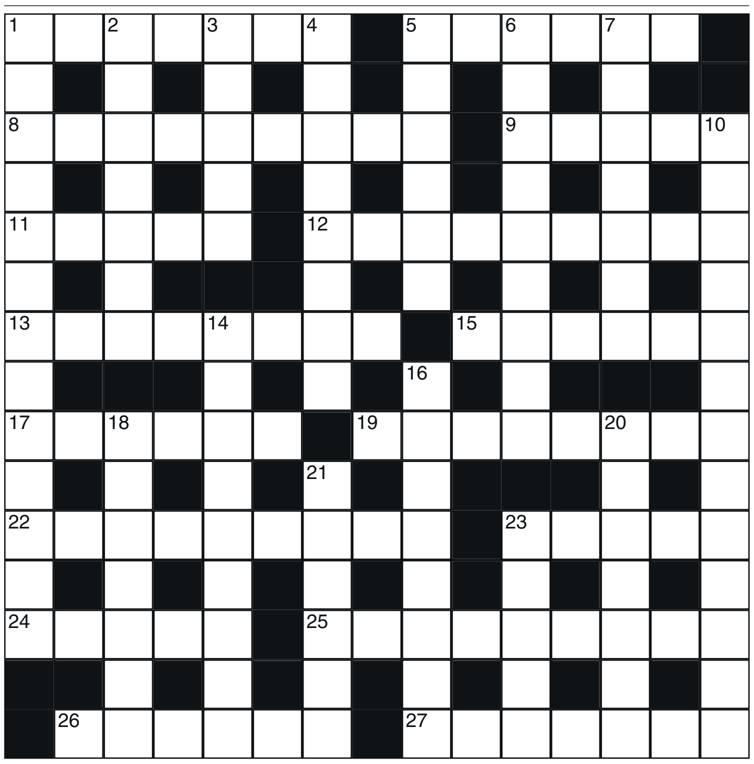
Vunipola, 30, was carried from the field on a stretcher with a knee injury in the first half of a 24-10 defeat by La Rochelle in the quarter-finals.

“It was his knee,” Mark McCall, the Saracens director of rugby, said. “I’ve never seen Billy carried off before. He’s on crutches. It doesn’t look good. It’s a huge worry.”

Vunipola was recalled by England for the Test series victory over Australia last summer and retained his place for the autumn campaign. But he was then dropped for the Six Nations after Steve

Continued on page 53

Times Crossword 28,573



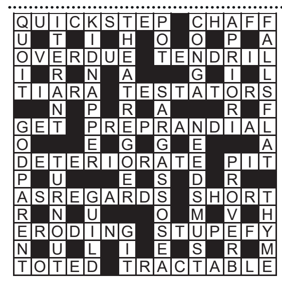
ACROSS

1 Problems exist over European exchange programme (7)
5 One holding a person’s hat by peak (6)
8 Is girl able to take out competitor? (9)
9 Complain doctor’s consuming alcohol (5)
11 Fraud succeeded with one pair of unknowns (5)
12 A large youth taking pint round for singer (9)
13 Your associate has perhaps initially put back bract (8)
15 What to get after nine assembly toys for young one? (6)
17 Dilapidated horse-drawn carriage carrying two bishops (6)
19 Crustacean caught with light line by angler, perhaps (8)
22 Feature of Berg’s music composed almost in A (9)
23 Be anxious having wife in residence (5)
24 Mushroom used in kitchen Okinawa-style (5)
25 Picture accepting a temperature disturbance for the country? (9)
26 Day in NY? Yes, fantastic city (6)
27 Painter of heavenly figure (7)

DOWN

1 Extra for packet? More than enough soup without seconds (6,7)
2 Man in suit failing to start Yankee’s guaranteed payment (7)
3 Principal Zulu city (5)
4 Dingy loos set up in Spitzbergen (8)
5 Look up in native American language (6)
6 Fighting spirit of dog can upset it over years (9)
7 Wealthy work fast after university (7)
10 Mum or dad morally correct raising Henry with qualifications (13)
14 One keeping books in balance fled having concealed one (9)
16 Key runs under professional test champion (8)
18 Excuse a page on science (7)
20 Sloth in tree mostly climbing with another likewise (7)
21 Small hint? Absolutely (6)
23 Be mean with male interrupting dance (5)

Prize solution 28,566



Check today’s answers by ringing 0905 757 0141 by midnight. Calls cost £1 per minute plus your telephone company’s network access charge. SP: Spoke 0333 202 3390.

The winners of Prize Crossword No 28,566 are
R Aronson, Oxford
D Conquest, Felixstowe, Suffolk
M Dobell, Burgess Hill, West Sussex
D Fairweather, Pitlochry, Perth and Kinross
M Lloyd-Jones, Adpar, Ceredigion

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15

THE TIMES
thegame
MONDAY APRIL 10 2023
All the action from the weekend

PAGE 5
Palace hit five at Elland Road to deepen Leeds' relegation fears

PAGE 13
Gregor Robertson on Hollywood showdown in National League



Moments to decide a title?

Arsenal blow two-goal lead but it could have been worse after Salah misses penalty and Ramsdale pulls off two superb saves late on to preserve a crucial point for league leaders

PAGES 2-4



GODFREY PITT/ACTION PLUS/SHUTTERSTOCK; PHIL NOBLE/REUTERS

Arteta shows first signs

Liverpool	Arsenal
2	2
Salah 42 Firmino 87	Martinelli 8 Jesus 28

POSSESSION
59% | 41%

SHOTS ON TARGET
6 | 5

FOULS
11 | 11

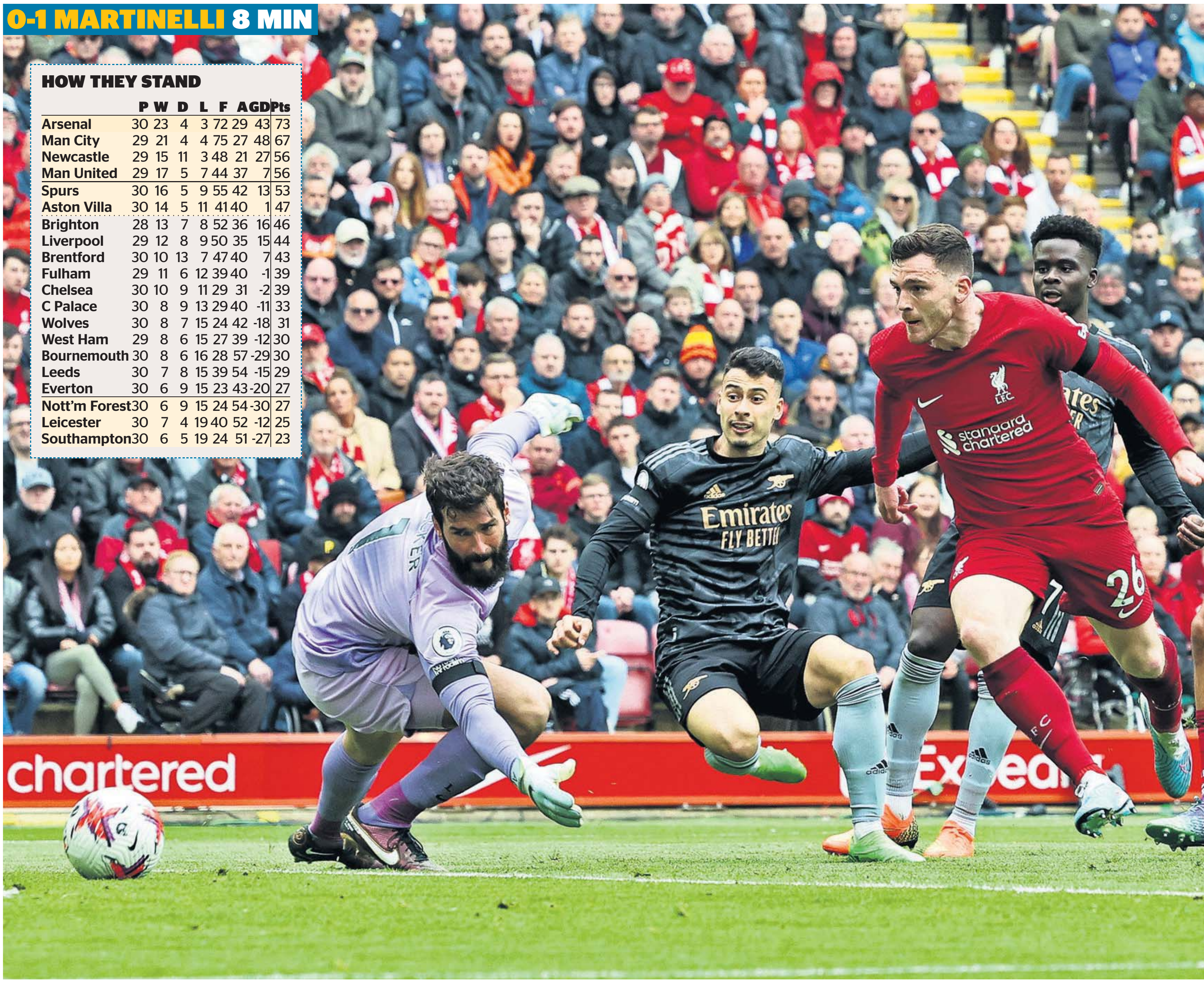
RATINGS

Liverpool (4-3-3): Alisson 7 — T Alexander-Arnold 7, I Konaté 6, V van Dijk 6, A Robertson 6 — J Henderson 7, Fabinho 6 (R Firmino 78min), C Jones 7 (T Alcántara 60, 7) — M Salah 5, C Gakpo 6, D Jota 6 (D Núñez 60, 6). **Booked** Alexander-Arnold, Robertson, Fabinho, Van Dijk.

Arsenal (4-3-3): A Ramsdale 9 — B White 6, R Holding 6, Gabriel 6, O Zinchenko 6 (K Tierney 88) — M Odegaard 7 (J Kiwior 80), T Partey 7, G Xhaka 6 — B Saka 7, G Jesus 7 (L Trossard 80), G Martinelli 8. **Booked** White, Xhaka, Ramsdale, Saka.

Referee P Tierney.

0-1 MARTINELLI 8 MIN



HOW THEY STAND

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Arsenal	30	23	4	3	72	29	43	73
Man City	29	21	4	4	75	27	48	67
Newcastle	29	15	11	3	48	21	27	56
Man United	29	17	5	7	44	37	7	56
Spurs	30	16	5	9	55	42	13	53
Aston Villa	30	14	5	11	41	40	1	47
Brighton	28	13	7	8	52	36	16	46
Liverpool	29	12	8	9	50	35	15	44
Brentford	30	10	13	7	47	40	7	43
Fulham	29	11	6	12	39	40	-1	39
Chelsea	30	10	9	11	29	31	-2	39
C Palace	30	8	9	13	29	40	-11	33
Wolves	30	8	7	15	24	42	-18	31
West Ham	29	8	6	15	27	39	-12	30
Bournemouth	30	8	6	16	28	57	-29	30
Leeds	30	7	8	15	39	54	-15	29
Everton	30	6	9	15	23	43	-20	27
Nott'm Forest	30	6	9	15	24	54	-30	27
Leicester	30	7	4	19	40	52	-12	25
Southampton	30	6	5	19	24	51	-27	23

HENRY WINTER

Chief Football Writer
At Anfield



When the dust settles on this fractious, volcanic, compelling meeting, this could still prove a vital point for Arsenal. But even a clear-eyed review of events here will confirm that Arsenal would have taken three points, putting them closer to the Premier League title, but for two moments of naivety by Granit Xhaka and Mikel Arteta.

Player and manager broke cardinal rules for visitors to Anfield. Xhaka stirred the home fans up and then Arteta invited the home team on. Arsenal threw away two points. Of course, nothing was going to be decided either way for Arsenal here. It is when April slides into May, and Arsenal travel to Manchester City and Newcastle United with Chelsea at home in between, that the legitimacy of their title claims will truly be decided, but this felt an opportunity wasted. Arsenal would also have lost it late on but for the shot-stopping of Aaron Ramsdale.

For the 3,000 Arsenal fans who had travelled north hopefully, who had joined their Liverpool counterparts in a deeply moving period of silence on the 34th anniversary of the Hillsborough disaster, this draw must have felt a frustrating outcome. They revealed a naivety, a vulnerability at just the time when the City juggernaut is gathering ominous speed. Arsenal are still six points clear but City have that game in hand, that game at home to Arsenal, and a superior goal difference. The race is going down to the wire but it's even closer after this weekend.

The first mistake came from Xhaka. For 40 minutes, Trent Alexander-Arnold and Ibrahima Konaté could not deal with the quicksilver Gabriel Martinelli. For 40 minutes, Arsenal attacked like champions. For 40 minutes, Liverpool were so flat, so sluggish. It was men against statues.

Liverpool had not conceded in seven hours and 34 minutes in the league at Anfield, and then they let in two in 20 minutes. Their first came in the eighth minute when Ben White, Bukayo Saka and Martin Odegaard worked the ball forward and Virgil van Dijk's attempted intervention presented the chance to Martinelli, whose third touch guided the ball past Alisson.

Arsenal had the advantage, the louder backing, and calmly added a second after 28 minutes. It was so easy. Liverpool players were either out of position or simply not responding.They were all over the place. Xhaka lifted the ball over Alexander-Arnold, Martinelli ran at Konaté, then checked back and crossed with his right foot. Gabriel Jesus stole between Van Dijk and Andy Robertson to steer his header in. So simple. In the away end, the chant arose, "we're going to win the league".

But then Xhaka tore into Alexander-Arnold with half-time just five minutes away. He caught the Liverpool right back late, Alexander-Arnold retaliated, they squared up and when push came to shove, Anfield erupted.

Xhaka has been such an important player for Arsenal this season, his fuse longer, his influence on games stronger. So this was madness. He lit a fire within the Liverpool players. He ignited their fans' anger. Alexander-Arnold turned to the Sir Kenny Dalglish Stand and urged more noise, more fight, and they responded. Raw emotion, anger and hurt pride, powered Jürgen Klopp's players now. Tactics — whatever tactics Liverpool had — went flying out the window as they flew forward.

It was so needless of Xhaka, so damaging. Anfield was alive now. There are few better sights and sounds in the game than Liverpool storming forward, willed on by their fans here. Within two minutes of Xhaka's ill-advised flare-up with Alexander-Arnold, Liverpool made a game of it.

Players who were anonymous were now affronted, and on the front foot. Cody Gakpo played Curtis Jones down the inside-left channel and the Englishman cut inside, dragging Arsenal across before back-heeling the ball on for Diogo Jota. Liverpool were pouring into the box now, urged on by their fans. Jota cut the ball back towards Jordan Henderson, who stretched out a foot, diverting it to the far post where Mo Salah stretched in ahead of Gabriel to turn home his 24th goal of the season.

The tide had turned and Xhaka was largely responsible. There was still time before the break for Henderson to blaze over, and as the combatants dispersed at the break, the assistant referee, Constantine Hatzidakis, appeared to catch Robertson with his elbow. An official might simply have had enough of hectoring players. Hatzidakis could have been trying to shrug off Robertson, who had given him some pithy words about his flagmanship earlier, but that was inexcusable by the official.

Seven minutes after the restart, and Liverpool now attacking the Kop, Rob Holding dived in, bringing down Jota. Paul Tierney pointed to the spot, presenting Salah with the perfect chance to equalise. Salah ran in with his usual confidence but dragged his left-footed kick wide. Klopp was convinced it was in.

Arsenal were reprieved. The Kop sought to lift Salah, singing his name. Liverpool tried to find that equaliser again. Alexander-Arnold hunted down Oleksandr Zinchenko.

PETER WALTON

Former Premier League Referee



Of course, Constantine Hatzidakis should not have pushed his elbow towards Andrew Robertson. All officials have a duty to uphold standards and the PGMOL probe may bring a reprimand.

However, I believe the available replays make the incident look worse than it probably was. Robertson went over to the assistant, and Hatzidakis then motions in the Liverpool left back's direction. The quality of the footage makes more than speculation difficult.

Regardless, this episode is emblematic of the heightening tensions between players and officials. It is also worth emphasising that Robertson instigated the dispute by unnecessarily approaching Hatzidakis, as the confronting of referees and their assistants continues.



of weakness

TIMES PHOTOGRAPHER BRADLEY ORMESHER' JON SUPER/AP



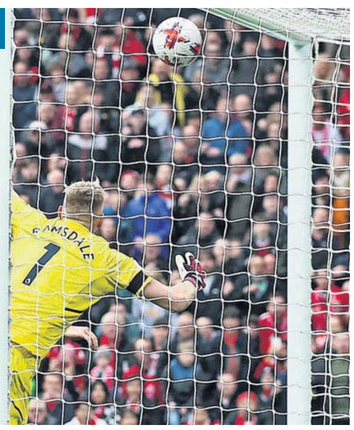


0-2 JESUS 28 MIN



1-2 SALAH 42 MIN





2-2 FIRMINO 87 MIN

Ramsdale saved from Salah. On the hour, Klopp sent on Darwin Núñez and Thiago Alcântara for Jota and Jones.

Arsenal were now absorbing the punches and hitting on the break. Martinelli almost found Saka but Alisson intervened.

Arsenal fans behind Alisson's goal were unstinting in their support. They knew how vital, possibly season-defining, these minutes were. Just hold on.

The managers then acted. With 12 minutes remaining, Klopp twisted again, sending on Roberto Firmino for Fabinho, giving Liverpool extra attacking subtlety. And then Arteta made his error, perhaps betraying his inexperience.

He took off his creative catalyst and captain, Martin Odegaard, and sent on Jakub Kiwior. The Polish international had come on in the Premier League only once before, when Arsenal were leading 4-1 at home to Crystal Palace with four minutes remaining.

Here, Kiwior arrived with 10 minutes and inevitably a huge chunk of added time to come. It signalled Arteta trying to close the game down, but came across as almost defeatism. It invited Liverpool on even more. Arteta has been so assured with his decision-making this season, one of the main reasons why Arsenal have a chance of a first title in 19 years, but this was a major mistake. Liverpool sensed more weakness.

Inserting Jorginho, who knows what it takes to close games down, for Odegaard would have made more sense. Jorginho could have tackled Liverpool moves before they built up too much momentum. Leandro Trossard came on at the same as the Kiwior/Odegaard switch but that had logic as Jesus was tiring.

Kiwior went into a back five having to contend with Gakpo, Núñez , Firmino and Salah with Alexander-Arnold marauding all over. Arsenal attempted a low block, Liverpool poured forward, and such were their constant waves of pressure that they eventually equalised.

Alexander-Arnold nutmegged Zinchenko and crossed to the far post where Firmino headed in for a goal that will have been celebrated among Manchester City fans as well as Liverpool's.

Ramsdale, who vied with Martinelli as man of the match, rescued Arsenal with a close-range save from Konaté and then stretching to his right to claw away a Salah special. Ramsdale kept hold of a point. Xhaka and Arteta should be particularly grateful.

It was chaos, says manager

PAUL JOYCE

Mikel Arteta lamented the "chaos" which engulfed Arsenal's second-half display at Anfield as he said his side wasted the chance to restore their eight-point lead at the top of the Premier League.

The Arsenal manager contrasted the swashbuckling style which had allowed the visitors to claim a two-nil advantage after 28 minutes which they proceeded to throw away.

Arsenal's lead is now six points, although they have played a game more than second-placed Manchester City and must visit the Etihad on April 26.

"We gave every ball away especially in dangerous areas," Arteta said. "When that happens it's chaos, it's a lot of balls in your box, it's difficult to get out of those situations and then you have to suffer. The big lesson is probably to play the way we did in the first half."

TONY CASCARINO

Weekend talking points

Ramsdale to be Arsenal's key player in title run-in

I thought Aaron Ramsdale was going to be Arsenal's most important player going into the run-in before yesterday's game, and I think so even more now. He was superb and without him Arsenal would almost certainly have been beaten.

Goalkeepers get scrutinised more than any other position and if Arsenal are going to win the Premier League, he needs to be their star. Particularly because they have two more very tough away games to come — at Manchester City and Newcastle United.

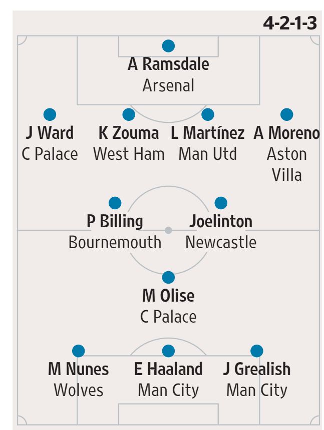
Arsenal's style is to attack and be progressive and this makes them very dangerous going forward but also leaves them vulnerable as we saw yesterday. They give away chances.

If Ramsdale hits an indifferent patch there is no way they can win the league. And the difference between a goalkeeper and an outfield player is there is no way you are going to change a 'keeper if he does badly, certainly no way that Mikel Arteta will drop Ramsdale, pretty much whatever happens.

Not that that is a remote possibility if he carries on playing like he did yesterday, making a whole string of excellent saves as Liverpool really turned the screw

The one where he cleared from Ibrahima Konaté on his goalline was tremendous but I thought the save from Mo Salah's shot, which got a slight deflection, was even better — absolutely outstanding. He has really quick feet, that's his greatest attribute, and he's going to need them between now and the end of the season.

TEAM OF THE WEEK



Hodgson getting more from Palace's attackers

The seven goals Crystal Palace have scored in two games under Roy Hodgson explain why the club sacked Patrick Vieira.

There was a feeling that Vieira was not getting enough from his technical players such as Michael Olise and Ebere Eze and Roy has come straight in and got them scoring, and scoring a lot.

This is not necessarily something you would associate with Roy, 75, but given those two wins and the way things look at the bottom of the table I think he has almost done enough already to keep them safe.

It's a great achievement and I can't help looking at what Roy has done, and what Neil Warnock (who is a year younger) is doing at Huddersfield and wondering is some younger coaches over-complicate things. It can be a simple game, football.

Only a long ban can stop Toney from reaching top

I hope we find out soon what punishment Ivan Toney might be facing after betting charges. Without those charges we would be talking about one of the most exciting players in the Premier League. I can't believe Toney was ever a League One player — his touch, control and understanding of the game is exceptional. I know he missed a penalty against Newcastle — rare for him — but this season he has been phenomenal. The team he faced on Saturday would certainly be looking at signing him and, were it not for the charges hanging over him, then surely Manchester United and Chelsea would be too. I don't mean to insult Brentford but Toney is destined for the top. The only thing holding him back is the prospect of a ban. If it's a long one then that might deny him a move to a top-six side.

Midfield giants bring unique traits to teams

We have often discussed the death of the big man up top but perhaps the role has been replaced by the big man in central midfield. Philip Billing, Scott McTominay and Joelinton were all impressive on Saturday and all offer considerable presence in midfield. It's not quite the Marouane Fellaini role and all three players offer different strengths but perhaps they do what Paul Pogba was supposed to do for Manchester United — intimidate, help control possession and get into the box to score goals too.

Marsch's interview skills must be very impressive

Football management must be more about interviews and presentation than your actual CV these days. That's the only way I can explain Jesse Marsch being linked to top jobs. After struggling at Leeds he came close to taking over at Southampton and was linked to the Leicester job, though he is now out of the running. Perhaps Marsch is a bit like André Villas-Boas, who apparently interviewed so well at Tottenham that Daniel Levy said that he'd have given him the job again even after he'd sacked him.

Xhaka blowing his fuse could turn title race

Flashpoint was foolish and Arsenal midfielder has only put the league leaders under much more pressure, says **Paul Joyce**

Bukayo Saka had been left with his face in the dirt and one hand pawing at the small of his back where Andrew Robertson had just made his mark.

Over on Arsenal's other flank, Gabriel Jesus was dumped into touch as Virgil van Dijk connected with his right boot where he had missed with his left.

Enter Granit Xhaka. It mattered little that Arsenal led 2-0, the away supporters singing triumphantly about winning the Premier League title, and Liverpool seemingly cut adrift with half-time looming. Enough was enough.

As tempers continued to fray, the midfielder left a calculated boot in on Trent Alexander-Arnold. The full back, growing in confidence after initially being left in Gabriel Martinelli's slipstream, shoved his rival, a mêlée ensued and Anfield erupted like only Anfield can.

It was a moment to kick-start a rousing comeback, the cost of which for Arsenal will only become clear in the coming weeks.

If Xhaka, brawn getting the better of his brain, could have his time again, he would surely have resisted the temptation to bring the "jungle," as Mikel Arteta had called this arena, to life.

Within a minute, that gaping deficit had been halved as Jürgen Klopp's players suddenly remembered the second part of his pre-match clarion call when he had appealed for them to "fight like animals" but also display calmness on the ball.

Curtis Jones was the one who belatedly obliged, with a neat flick for the overlapping Robertson in the move that ended with Mohamed Salah scoring.

From there, Liverpool might have scored seven, and should have scored at least three, with Salah erring from the penalty spot for the second time in the past four games, and man-of-the-match Aaron Ramsdale producing some remarkable saves.

Amid the tumult, the breathless endeavour, it was hard to shake the suspicion that, for all Xhaka has taken steps towards redemption this season, he also retains an innate ability to make life difficult for his team-mates.

"A bit of fire in a game like that, there's nothing wrong with it," Alexander-Arnold, reflecting upon the incident, said. "He nudged me off the ball, so it's a natural reaction to do it back. It got the crowd going."

What made the flashpoint all the more foolish is that it bore echoes of last season's league clash here between the sides in November 2021. On that night, Arteta, the Arsenal manager, was the one reacting to fouls on his players and confronting the fourth official before turning his ire on Klopp.

Liverpool, propelled forward by a wall of noise and using the emotional crutch of Anfield to good effect, went on to win 4-0.

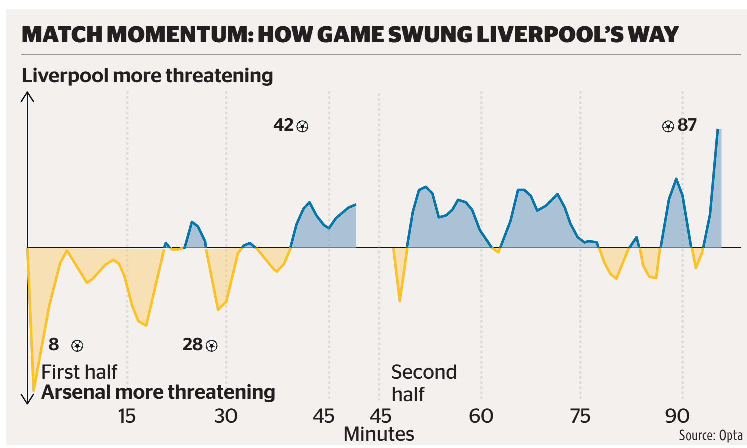
Back then, they were both relentless and ruthless. Here, only one side of their make-up was evident, with enough gilt-edged opportunities squandered to match the amount of goals put past Manchester United last month.

Such a lack of killer instinct is all part of the explanation for

TIMES PHOTOGRAPHER BRADLEY ORMESHER



Xhaka and Alexander-Arnold square up towards the end of the first half, the moment which sparked Liverpool into life



Liverpool's underwhelming season, and Klopp's mind is probably already made up about a summer overhaul of the squad.

The focus, at least among the fanbase, is on the pursuit of Jude Bellingham, the Borussia Dortmund midfielder. What then of what Klopp had said at his press conference on Friday, when asked whether, with smart recruitment, Liverpool could turn around their fortunes in an instant, as Arsenal have done?

"The difference is whatever we do next year it will never be enough from people's point of view and your point of view," he said. "But yes, with smart recruitment, we will improve — definitely. That is the plan."

Maybe Klopp simply meant that the clamour for new signings is never quelled. Spend, for example, £150 million and there will remain some who believe the spree should have been nearer to £200 million.

Yet there remains that alternative view that Liverpool require more than a £120 million player to eradicate serious glitches.

The opening half an hour would have upheld that argument as Arsenal cut loose with Martinelli to the fore and the hosts' defending powder-puff. In the last hour, meanwhile, this group were at their enthralling best, summoning the courage to clamber off the canvas thanks to Roberto Firmino's 87th-minute header.

Afterwards, Klopp and Arteta both lamented two points dropped. Xhaka, meanwhile, was alone with his thoughts, left to weigh up the moment his indiscipline turned a game and perhaps an entire season.

Two-for-one cinema tickets at Everyman

Each Wednesday, Times+ members can enjoy a trip to Everyman with a friend. This month, you could watch *Dungeons & Dragons: Honour Among Thieves* starring Chris Pine, Michelle Rodriguez and Regé-Jean Page.



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Hodgson lapping up perfect start

Leeds United	Crystal Palace
1	5
Bamford 21	Guéhi 45+1, Ayew 53, 77, Eze 55, Édouard 69

RATINGS
Leeds United (4-2-3-1): I Meslier 5 — L Ayling 5, R Koch 6, P Struijk 5, J Firpo 5 (R Kristensen 60min, 5) — M Roca 6, W McKennie 5 — J Harrison 7, B Aaronson 6 (W Gnoto 60, 4), L Sinisterra 5 (Rodrigo 60, 4) — P Bamford 6 (G Rutter 79). **Booked** Firpo, McKennie, Gnonto.
Crystal Palace (4-3-3) S Johnstone 8 — J Ward 7 (N Clyne 87), J Andersen 7, M Guéhi 7, T Mitchell 6 — E Eze 8, C Doucouré 6 (L Milivojevic 80), J Schlupp 7 (J McArthur 80) — M Olise 8, O Édouard 7 (W Hughes 74, 6), J Ayew 8 (J-P Mateta 80). **Booked** Ward.
Referee S Hooper. **Attendance** 36,427.

CARL RECINE/ACTION IMAGES/REUTERS



Eze, boot in hand, leads the celebrations after putting Palace 3-1 up against Leeds

MARTIN HARDY

Roy Hodgson turned on his heels, his hands, which had spent most of the afternoon in his coat pockets, were now waving in the air in a double fist celebration. In ten dramatic minutes, his Crystal Palace side had scored three times. That kind of remarkable turnaround can even overtake the emotions of even someone as level-headed and experienced as the 75-year-old.

Hodgson had wandered around around Leeds city centre earlier in the day, pictured in a tracksuit. Now he was in charge of Elland Road and the reason he cannot let go of the game came in the 55th minute when Eberechi Eze scored less than two minutes after Jordan Ayew to give Palace a 3-1 lead. The small pocket of Palace supporters tucked away in a corner of the stadium, celebrated in disbelief. The rest of the old ground filled with groans.

It got better for Hodgson and the team he took control of once again less than three weeks ago as there were further goals from Odsonne Édouard and Ayew. Palace, his Palace, ended up smashing five past a relegation rival. "He's one of our own," the Palace fans chanted.

"It's a perfect start," Hodgson said. "I have to enjoy these moments as they won't last for ever. The training has been fantastic, the sun has been shining. It's nice to be back. It gives us a great Easter Monday.

"Everything couldn't be better so far but I know there are different types of days ahead and one day I'll be answering very different questions [after bad results]. The second half was very good in every respect and we had to weather a storm in the first. If I had to single out someone who doesn't get a lot of praise, it would be Jordan Ayew. His work rate helped us enormously. It put out a marker."

When Ayew was substituted in the 80th minute with two goals under his belt he walked along the technical area of the visitors' dugout and leant towards the substitutes sitting down, like a rock star getting the acclaim of front-row fans. His hand was grabbed, or slapped, his smile never wavering.

This was a great day if you were anything to do with Palace. Michael Olise created three of the five goals in a 16-minute purple patch. There was mild panic whenever he had the ball during that period. Palace finished the game with 16 shots on goal and 12th place in the table thanks to a second successive win. Before that had come four defeats in a row.

How quickly their form has turned, and how quickly this game turned. Leeds, who had not conceded five goals at home in a top-flight league game since 1991, had led after 21 minutes through Patrick Bamford. They had four efforts on goal in the first eight minutes. Sam Johnstone in that period was Palace's best player, saving at full stretch from Brendan Aaronson and Jack Harrison. He could do nothing, though, to stop the cleverly placed header from Bamford, from a Harrison corner, that flew into the top corner. In celebration, Leeds's players ran to the home dugout, and to Javi Gracia.



Hodgson praised Ayew's work rate

The Palace goal avalanche almost started in the 25th minute, when Jeffrey Schlupp hit the post with a header from a right-wing corner. A warning of what was to come. Ayew glanced a downward header narrowly wide eight minutes later, and then, in first-half stoppage time, a free kick was flicked on by Schlupp to Marc Guéhi and he stabbed a shot from close range past Illan Meslier.

It was all Palace from that moment on. Leeds crumbled. Eight minutes into the second half, frantic defending from Leeds resulted in the ball ending up on the Palace right. There was no pressure on the ball from Pascal Struijk, so Olise moved it on to his left, crossed deep and Ayew got ahead of Luke Ayling to power a header beyond Meslier's outstretched right arm. Ayling slapped the ground in anger. It was the last show of defiance from the home team.

Within two minutes, Palace had their third. Leeds's capitulation was that quick. Eze picked the ball up about ten yards inside the Leeds half, played a pass to Olise, out to his right, who advanced unchallenged, before slipping a clever through-ball, back to Eze. It was a first-time finish, with the outside of his right foot from Eze, that took the ball beyond Meslier, once more. He took his boot off in celebration.

Palace were home and dry and in the 69th minute, Olise was allowed to run 40 yards with the ball, unchallenged by anyone in white, before passing to his left, to Édouard. The forward, who had not scored in his previous 15 Premier League games, was afforded the time to move the ball on to his left foot before drilling an angled shot that flew past Meslier into the Leeds goal. It looked so easy. "We want five," chanted the Palace supporters. They would get it, in the 77th minute. Will Hughes won a 50-50 with Weston McKennie, the ball broke to Ayew and he had the time, around 12 yards from goal, to wait for the ball, to set himself and then to shoot past Meslier, once more.

3
Olise (21y 188d) is the third-youngest player to get a hat-trick of PL assists after Trent Alexander-Arnold and Jermaine Pennant

"The second half was very tough for us because we were conceding goals," Gracia, the Leeds manager, said. "We were not so aggressive and we were soft in many actions.

"The first half was very good and we deserved something more. In the second half we didn't keep the same level. We have to learn something from today. We have to learn when we are playing together and we are doing 100 per cent we are able to beat anyone. If we don't do it, you know what can happen."

Moyes gets his reward after recalling West Ham's old guard

IAN HAWKEY

Fulham	**0**
West Ham United Reed (og) 23	**1**

RATINGS
Fulham (4-2-3-1): B Leno 7 — C Soares 6 (Tete 68min, 6), Tosin 6, T Ream 7, A Robinson 6 — H Reed 6 (T Cairney 46, 7), J Palhinha 7 — B De Cordova-Reid 6 (M Solomon 46, 6), A Pereira 7 (D James 85), Willian 7 (H Wilson 85) — C Vinícius 6. **Booked** Vinícius.
West Ham United (4-4-2): L Fabianski 7 — V Coufal 7, K Zouma 8, A Ogbonna 8, A Cresswell 7 — J Bowen 7, D Rice 7, T Soucek 7, P Fornals 6 (S Benrahma 60, 6) — D Ings 6 (F Downes 60, 6), M Antonio 7 (M Cornet 90). **Booked** Rice.
Referee J Gillett.
Attendance 24,491.

Not a lot of trust passed through the turnstiles at the Bishop's Park end of Craven Cottage on Saturday. Somebody brought a 'Moyes Out' banner. On the hour, a double substitution set off a scornful chant about the West Ham United manager's decision-making. They had been a goal ahead for a while by then, keeping Fulham at arm's length. David Moyes, at whom the sceptics channelled mistrust, had organised that part of his plan successfully.

After his side carried the resistance to its profitable conclusion, Moyes talked of trust. He has it in Angelo Ogbonna, senior citizen in his squad and chief soother of scars left by last week's 5-1 loss to Newcastle United.

In came Ogbonna, Aaron Cresswell and Vladimir Coufal. An element of the widespread reshaping of the XI had been timetabled, Moyes said, but correction was needed too. "I had in mind I would change a few for this," he said. "I saw a few boys who have been around a while, Cressy, Ogbonna, Coufal, all defending well with Kurt Zouma."

Ogbonna, 34, was the outstanding marshall, tracking, blocking, seeing threat. The Italian "is a really good, experienced player I can trust," noted Moyes. "Angelo has been a great player for us over the years and is still required in terms of performances. When you are in this position in the league, there is a way you have to play to grind results out. The decisions we made worked out well."

Coufal had a hand in the goal. Too much of a hand as far as Marco Silva, the Fulham manager, saw it. Coufal's run down the right and tussle with Antonee Robinson featured clear contact between the ball and both of Coufal's arms before his half-cleared cross. Jarrod Bowen's pass was then turned into his own net by Harrison Reed. Silva felt vexed by VAR's lack of scrutiny. The effect on the outcome might have rankled less had Maxwel Cornet been composed in the dying minutes and doubled the lead.

Silva was also frustrated at Fulham's lack of imagination. If Moyes dipped back into a familiar playbook of survival, there were souvenirs of top-flight struggles past for Fulham. It is four league defeats on the trot now, an echo of the downward spirals that led to relegation the last two times they came up from the second tier.

This spring, there should be plenty enough points in the bank to exclude Fulham from the crowded relegation tussle. But clubs beneath them who have Fulham among their remaining fixtures may feel thankful they do.

Fernandes gives Ten Hag options at ‘quarterback’

Man United 2
McTominay 36, Martial 71

Everton 0

RATINGS
Manchester United (4-2-3-1): D de Gea 7 — A Wan-Bissaka 7, H Maguire 7, L Martínez 7, T Malacia 7 — S McTominay 8, B Fernandes 8 — Antony 7 (A Martial 60min, 7), M Sabitzer 7 (Fred 76), J Sancho 7 (C Eriksen 77) — M Rashford 8 (W Weghorst 81).
Everton (4-1-4-1): J Pickford 8 — S Coleman 5 (N Patterson 87), M Keane 6, J Tarkowski 6, B Godfrey 4 (V Mykolenko 46, 6) — I Gueye 6 (J Garner 60, 5) — D Gray 6, A Iwobi 7, A Onana 5 (T Davies 60, 5), D McNeil 5 — E Simms 4 (N Maupay 70, 5)
Referee M Oliver. **Attendance** 73, 509.

PAUL HIRST

During a break in play in the 87th minute of Manchester United’s victory over Everton, Bruno Fernandes wandered over to the touchline to take a breather.

Sucking air after his considerable exertions, Fernandes took a gulp from a water bottle before Erik ten Hag went over to the Portugal player to give him an impromptu hug.

Ten Hag, just like the TV pundits who had recently declared Fernandes man of the match, knew how vital his contribution had been to one of United’s best performances of the season.

“Bruno Fernandes was definitely the best player on the pitch today,” Ten Hag said.

Ten Hag is not the first United manager to say that, of course. There have been the odd dips in form during his 3½ years at Old Trafford, but Fernandes is the best attacker to have played for United in the post-Ferguson era.

What separated this match-winning performance from so many others in Fernandes’s career was that he inflicted pain on the opposition from deep.

Just like in the 1-0 win over Brentford last Wednesday, Fernandes sat in front of the back four and Scott McTominay and Marcel Sabitzer were allowed to get forward. Of the 119 touches that Fernandes had on Saturday, 52 of them came in his own half.

We are so used to seeing Fernandes do his damage in and around the opposition’s box, but this time, he launched attacks from deep over a static Everton back four who were vulnerable to United’s pacey front three.

The pick of the passes from Fernandes was a delightful 50-yard diagonal pass that landed just over Ben Godfrey’s head to set Antony free to run into the box.

Sean Dyche, the Everton manager, likened Fernandes’s role to that of a quarterback in American football, launching attacks from deep.

Fernandes benefited from the youthful naivety of Ellis Simms, who is still making his way in the game. The 22-year-old striker rarely pressed Fernandes.

But the successful deployment of Fernandes as a deep-lying midfielder shows just how intelligent and technically gifted he is. “We just didn’t get close enough to Fernandes and with his range of passing, and their pace in behind, we were just struggling,” James Tarkowski, the Everton defender, said.

Ten Hag and his coaches deserve credit for coming up with the idea during a period when he has been without Casemiro, who was suspended for four matches after receiving his second red card of the season against Southampton last month.

“When you miss players you have to find solutions as a manager, as a coaching staff,” Ten Hag said. “When Casemiro and [Christian] Eriksen are available there is no need to bring Bruno deeper, but if you are missing them, you have to find a solution to bring the ball out from the back, to get the build-up in, to progress the ball and to attack. We found the idea to bring Bruno deeper and he is doing brilliant.”

The redeployment of Fernandes has given Sabitzer and McTominay time to shine and they did not let their manager down. Sabitzer, who set up Marcus Rashford’s goal against Brentford, performed well and McTominay was at his best on Saturday, pushing into the opposition area and scoring the opener.

The Scotland midfielder, who scored four goals in the recent international window, retained possession well and performed his defensive duties alongside Fernandes when Everton had the ball.

Casemiro, who has served his suspension, has been superb all season and Eriksen looked sharp on Saturday when he came on for the final 13 minutes in the position that Fernandes had been playing in.

Fred is going through a sticky patch, but the five other midfielders in Ten Hag’s squad all look to be appealing options, which will provide the United manager with a welcome selection headache in the final stage of the campaign.

“Games will always be decided in midfield,” Ten Hag said recently.

Rashford, of course, has decided many games of late too. Ten Hag said that he was “praying” that his top scorer, who set Anthony Martial up for the second, would not be out for too long with a muscle injury that caused him to hobble off late on.

Everton would have been on the end of a hiding had it not been for an excellent performance from their goalkeeper Jordan Pickford.

At the other end of the field, they missed Dominic Calvert-Lewin’s aerial threat and energy. Dyche said the England forward was “making progress” in his recovery from a hamstring injury. Everton host Fulham on Saturday before an away match against Crystal Palace. Saturday’s result ended a four-match unbeaten streak under the former Burnley manager.

“It was a nice little run,” Tarkowski said. “But I think it was just a reminder of the levels we need to reach. We’ve got eight games to go and there are plenty more points to play for.”

I do myself justice each game I start, says Maguire

PAUL HIRST

Harry Maguire has been doing extra training in a bid to end what he regards a disappointing spell out of the Manchester United first team.

After making his first Premier League start since February, Maguire opened up about the frustration of falling behind Raphaël Varane and Lisandro Martínez in the pecking order at Old Trafford.

“Listen, I’m not going to stand here and say I love it. I don’t,” Maguire, the United captain, said. “I want to play every game and I have done for the last eight years of my career. But also I have to respect the manager and his decisions and also respect how good the competition is at centre back. All our centre backs have played at the top level and will all be disappointed when sat on the bench.”

Erik ten Hag, the United manager, said that Maguire put in a “really great” performance on his 13th start of the season. “This was a different Harry to what we have seen in the first months [of the season],” he said.

Maguire, to his credit, has approached the challenge facing him professionally.

“I train hard and competitively in everything I do whether it is a small-sided game or possession, and I always do extras,” Maguire, 30, said. “Last season was disappointing. Our form — and my form — wasn’t good.

“This year I feel I am in a good place mentally and physically and every time I’ve started a game I’ve done myself justice. I’m sure I’m going to get numerous starts between now and the end of the season.”

Maguire’s future is certain to become a talking point this summer. The defender has two years left on his contract and is being monitored by several clubs, including West Ham.

When asked about the possibility of other clubs keeping tabs on his situation, Maguire said: “We’ve got such a busy end to the season. My mentality is that I want to get another two trophies. I enjoyed lifting the Carabao Cup and I want to lift another two. I will work as hard as I can and take every game as it comes.”



Hojbjerg clips Mitoma in the area but Brighton were not awarded a penalty

Visions of Conte 2.0

Tottenham 2
Son Heung-min 10, Kane 79

Brighton 1
Dunk 34

RATINGS
Tottenham (3-4-3): H Lloris 6 — C Romero 6, E Dier 5, C Lenglet 6 — P Porro 5, O Skipp 6 (P Sarr 88min), P-E Hojbjerg 7, I Perisic 5 (J Tanganga 90) — D Kulusevski 6 (A Danjuma 78), H Kane 7, Son-Heung min 7. **Booked** Perisic, Hojbjerg, Romero.
Brighton (4-2-3-1) J Steele 6 — J Veltman 6 (J Enciso 85), L Dunk 7, L Colwill 6 (A Webster 69, 6), P Estupiñán 6 — M Caicedo 7, P Gross 7 — S March 6, A Mac Allister 7, K Mitoma 7 — D Welbeck 6 (E Ferguson 66, 6) **Booked** Gross.
Referee S Attwell. **Attendance** 61,405.

TOM ALLNUTT

If Daniel Levy were thinking that Roberto De Zerbi could be the manager to bring some calm to the chaos at Tottenham Hotspur this summer, here was a game to make the club’s chairman think again. On this evidence, De Zerbi would make even Antonio Conte seem diplomatic.

Perhaps it was to do Brighton & Hove Albion a disservice anyway to consider this an audition, given that only one of these teams is the product of a cohesive, forward-thinking and harmonious club and it is not the one without either a managing director of football or a permanent head coach.

But if De Zerbi was at least keen to further his burgeoning reputation, he would have been better off letting his players do the talking — rather than being sent off after getting into a touchline spat with his Tottenham counterpart, Cristian Stellini.

Brighton were a joy to watch, a model of how to play assertive, aggressive, front-foot football, the likes of which has been conspicuous by its absence in these parts of north London for most of this campaign.

How Tottenham’s fans would love their team to play this way, with verve and speed and attacking intent. The visiting side had 17 shots and 65 per cent possession. Brighton hit a post once, had two goals ruled out and were denied three penalties.

COLORSPORT/ANDREW COWIE; BBC



NO CONSOLATION

Brighton have suffered from the joint-most errors which PGMOL has reportedly admitted to this season*

Brighton	3
Wolves	3
Arsenal	2
Aston Villa	2
West Ham	1
Newcastle	1
Nottm Forest	1
Man Utd	1

*Premier League clubs only

Baffling how overbearing VAR managed to miss this

PETER WALTON



Former Premier League Referee

VAR needs to get back to basics. Its key objectives – consistency, minimal intervention, correcting clear errors and swift decision-making – were all strayed from over the weekend.

The disallowing of Kaoru Mitoma's goal against Tottenham Hotspur on Saturday for handball was perfectly acceptable. The assistant referee flagged an offence by the Brighton & Hove Albion forward, and there was no clear evidence to suggest otherwise.

However, chalking off Alexis Mac Allister's goal used a contradictory approach. This strike was originally allowed to stand, but the call was overturned despite no conclusive proof of handball. This went against the notion that VAR is only there to remove obviously wrong decisions.

Brighton not getting a penalty for Pierre-Emile Hojbjerg's challenge on Mitoma was just as baffling. Stuart Attwell, the on-field referee, was in a fantastic position and I can only speculate that his failure to spot the foul was due to an over-reliance on VAR. Anyhow, the technology should have identified the howler.

Meanwhile, Brentford's second penalty against Newcastle United should not have been given by a VAR overturn. Alexander Isak's challenge was what I label an "on-field" decision and the initial call should have stood either way. That the review took multiple minutes emphasised how this was not a glaring error.

There is growing pressure on Howard Webb to fix VAR, but he does not have a magic wand. Appointed the PGMOL chief refereeing officer last year, he came into a system with major problems and has not yet had enough time to solve them. A rebuild this substantial will not be quick.

for Spurs as De Zerbi blots CV

The Professional Game Match Officials Limited (PGMOL), the body responsible for Premier League referees, yesterday admitted that one of those penalty appeals — for Pierre-Emile Hojbjerg's second-half challenge on Kaoru Mitoma — should have resulted in a spot-kick. It is understood there has been direct communication between Brighton and Howard Webb, the chief refereeing officer of the PGMOL.

It is the third time this season that the PGMOL has admitted to a mistake that has cost Brighton. It accepted that Fabinho, of Liverpool, should have been sent off for a tackle on Evan Ferguson in an FA Cup tie in January, and also said the offside line was drawn in the wrong place in a review which denied them a goal at Crystal Palace two weeks later.

For all his team's excellence, De Zerbi was as culpable in their collapse as the referee, Stuart Attwell. De Zerbi's antics pricked Brighton's momentum and stirred a listless Spurs into action in the final 20 minutes. The home fans, teetering on the edge of rebellion, suddenly had a cause to rally against. They sang for Mauricio Pochettino as Levy must have heard.

After De Zerbi was sent off, along with Stellini, Spurs came alive and it was no surprise when Harry Kane steered home Hojbjerg's clever pull-back to the edge of the penalty area. By then, De Zerbi was watching on a television in the away dressing room. He had chastised Stellini before kick-off and gloated after Lewis Dunk equalised before half-time, his header cancelling out Son Heung-min's stunning opener. Then came the mêlée before the hour that caused Attwell to produce two red cards.

De Zerbi refused to go into specifics but his anger towards Stellini apparently stemmed from an article in the Italian newspaper La Gazzetta dello Sport with the headline "De Zerbi exploited all of Graham Potter's work at Brighton". Stellini hardly mentioned Potter pre-match but De Zerbi was convinced he had been shown a lack of respect.

The surprise is that De Zerbi, whose English is improving but who uses a translator for his media duties, did not appreciate the difficulty of conveying nuance in a second language. He should know better than anyone the dangers of trusting translations that may, even by accident, exaggerate or mislead. And when De Zerbi took over from Potter in September, he was first to admit he was fortunate to be inheriting a confident, well-functioning team. "I don't know if it is so important, my habits; do you think it's important? One part of my character is my passion and I cannot lose this," he said. "The Premier League is a top league, it is a privilege to work here, but I want to keep my character."

How this affects De Zerbi's standing remains to be seen, but Brighton's chances of finishing in the top four would appear remote now, with ten points separating them and Manchester United, while Tottenham are pulling away. Brighton lost the game after their manager lost control.

Guimarães: I'm not happy with painful ankle

Brentford 1
Toney 45+1 (pen)

Newcastle United 2
Raya (og) 54, Isak 61

RATINGS
Brentford (5-3-2): D Raya 6 — A Hickey 7 (B Mbeumo 74min), P Jansen (Zanka 16, 6), E Pinnock 6, B Mee 5 (V Janelt 82), R Henry 7 — J Dasilva 6 (S Baptiste 74), C Norgaard 6 (Y Vissa 82), M Jensen 7 — I Toney 7, K Schade 8.
Newcastle (4-3-3) N Pope 6 — K Trippier 7, F Schär 7, S Botman 5, D Burn 5 — S Longstaff 5 (C Wilson 46, 7), B Guimarães 6, J Willock 7 (E Anderson 88) — J Murphy 6, (A Gordon, 46, 5 (M Ritchie 90)), A Isak 7 (J Lascelles 88), Joelinton 8.
Booked Botman, Isak.
Referee C Kavanagh. **Attendance** 17,107.

ALYSON RUDD

Sometimes only a cliché will do: this was a prime example of a game of two halves and, while the Newcastle United substitutions at the interval clearly helped to bring a reversal of fortunes, there was one other change that enabled Eddie Howe's team to improve.

Bruno Guimarães, the linchpin of this Newcastle team, was, like his team-mates, under par for the first 45 minutes. They all seemed bored by having to play three games in six days. Nothing clicked, there was no energy. Brentford did not just bully them physically but strategically too. Guimarães, though, had an excuse. In the warm-up he twisted an ankle. By the second half, the painkillers had kicked in and he was more like his usual influential self.

"I got some pills but the first half was very tough for me," the Brazil midfielder said. "I think I improved my game and helped my team-mates to get the result. I don't know if I can say it, but it is pissing me off with my ankle. I need to get some rest and see at the end of the season what we can do, but I am not happy with [it]."

Despite the discomfort caused by his ankle, the 25-year-old was already focused on the next game, away to Aston Villa on Saturday lunchtime. "I will be OK, of course," he said of the trip to Villa Park.

It will be interesting to see if Howe starts the game against Unai Emery's side the way he finished the match in west London. Bereft creatively, he brought on Callum Wilson to play in attack alongside Alexander Isak. Howe prefers to substitute one for the other, and having them both on the pitch felt like a gamble, a dash of recklessness. Nonetheless it worked and the Newcastle head coach admitted that they dovetailed beautifully, with Wilson setting up the Sweden striker for the winning goal.

The other change Howe made at half-time was the introduction of Anthony Gordon who, one suspects, would turn a knitting circle into a rave. The former Everton winger duly brought an indignant energy that annoyed Thomas Frank's side. Gordon was hauled off just before the end, possibly because he had hurt his ankle, possibly to eat up time, and the 22-year-old was livid about it.

"He needs to control his emotions in that moment," Howe said, but you suspect that he was secretly rather pleased to see the passion Gordon brought to his lethargic team-mates.

Brentford, meanwhile, may have lost but this game illustrated how Frank digs deep into the detail to compensate for his lack of financial resources. Having noted how Jason Tindall, Howe's assistant, frequently engages with the fourth official, the Dane and his staff made a point of speaking to Stephen Martin, the man with the electronic board.

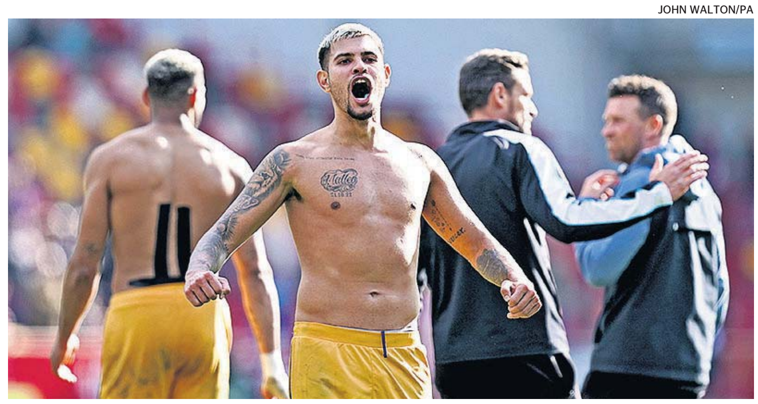
And when Frank pointed out to anyone interviewing him that the winning goal was scored by a striker who cost £63million it left the impression of a bright student who revises hard only to be pipped to the top marks by someone who could afford expensive tutoring.

Frank was also perturbed by what he called the dark arts on display as Ivan Toney prepared for the first of two penalty kicks. The Dane stressed that he was not seeking to find an excuse for the fact his striker missed from the spot for the first time as a Brentford player, but he does not approve of opposition players deliberately attempting to unsettle the penalty-taker.

When the home team were awarded a second spot kick, for a foul on Rico Henry, the Brentford players used diversionary tactics, crowding around the penalty spot, so that Toney could compose himself away from the throng. Yes, Frank was cross about his team's second home defeat of the season, but his observations revealed a coach who thinks deeply about what are the acceptable — and unacceptable — ways of winning.

Howe's attention to detail revolved around the team staying in London after their victory over West Ham United on Wednesday, leading Dan Burn, the defender, to joke that: "We need to get away from each other for a bit. Sick of the sight of them."

JOHN WALTON/PA



Newcastle's Guimarães celebrates at full-time after shrugging off an ankle injury

How Stones became one of Pep's indispensables

Southampton 1
Mara 72

Manchester City 4
Haaland 45, 68, Grealish 58, Álvarez 75 (pen)

RATINGS
Southampton (4-3-3): G Bazunu 6 — A Maitland-Niles 6, J Bednarek 5, A Bella-Kotchap 6, K Walker-Peters 6 — R Lavia 6 (I Diallo 80min), J Ward-Prowse 6, M Elyounoussi 6 (S Armstrong 61, 6) — T Walcott 5 (R Perraud 80), C Alcaraz 6 (M Djenepo 69, 6), K Sulemana 7 (S Mara 69, 7).
Manchester City (3-2-4-1): Ederson 7 — M Akanji 6, R Dias 7, N Aké 7 (S Gómez 81) — J Stones 8 (K Walker 56, 6), Rodri 7 (K Phillips 81) — R Mahrez 6 (B Silva 56, 6), K De Bruyne 8, I Gundogan 7, J Grealish 7 — E Haaland 8 (J Álvarez 69, 7).
Booked Stones, Haaland.
Referee R Jones. **Attendance** 30,963.

JAMES GHEERBRANT

It seems hard to believe that three years ago, John Stones's career appeared to be drifting into the doldrums. Between December 2019 and November 2020, he only started seven Premier League games. Manchester City's first-choice centre back partnership of Rúben Dias and Aymeric Laporte looked impenetrable.

A bad mistake in England's Nations League semi-final against Holland precipitated an exile from the national team which his infrequent involvement for City gave him scant opportunity to undo. Stones seemed likely to become one of those lost English talents who can't consolidate the promise of their early career, such as Dele Alli or Ross Barkley.

Fast forward three seasons and Stones is probably one of England's three best players on current form. He has wrested back Pep Guardiola's trust, to the point where he is now one of City's most indispensable players. And this season, Guardiola has paid him the ultimate compliment, the same accolade he lavished on Philipp Lahm, David Alaba and João Cancelo: he has turned him into an "inverted" full back — in other words, a full-back-cum-central midfielder.

One of the fundamental features of City's play over the past 2½ years has been how the team mutates from a three-at-the-back shape in possession to four-at-the-back off the ball. To do that, you need a player who can move between the edge of the back four and the midfield pivot. Cancelo and Oleksandr Zinchenko were the keys to making this shape-shift work, but when Zinchenko left in the summer and Cancelo was banished in January, Guardiola needed new men for the job.

Rico Lewis has shown an impressive command of the role, but in recent games, Stones has been the man to invert. Against Crystal Palace and Liverpool, and here against Southampton, he has played most of the match in a central midfield position alongside Rodri, dropping into the right back slot only when City lose possession. His performances have been exceptional: his 360-degree awareness and positional intuition have helped City build up, and his defensive instincts have given them even more solidity in the centre of the pitch.

"When you see the game from behind it's completely different to when you play in the middle and are surrounded," Guardiola said before this match. "That's why I appreciate a lot what he has done."

Stones's understanding with Rodri is so smooth, so subliminal, that it feels like they've been playing in a midfield pivot together for years. In each of City's past three games, Rodri has been the leading passer to Stones. But it's interesting to trace where Stones's passes have gone. Against Palace, when he was feeling his way into the role, he mostly found Manuel Akanji and Dias. Against Liverpool, he passed to Rodri most, but also played plenty to Riyad Mahrez and Kevin De Bruyne. At St Mary's, in what was Stones's most confident and forward-looking performance so far, Mahrez was his favourite target.

As a passer, Stones doesn't quite have the ability of, say, a Joshua Kimmich (to take another player who can flex between right back and central midfield) to play really dangerous passes into the final third. His particular super-strength is a little different: he almost never loses the ball. Stones's pass completion rate of 93.6 per cent is the highest of any Premier League with more than 200 passes this season.

Stones is therefore more of a "rhythm" passer: someone whose exceptional ball security and ability to pass quickly without taking too many touches greases the cogs of Guardiola's carousel. By smoothing the flow of City's possession, Stones not only helps to sap and warp the opposition, he also buys his team time to organise themselves into the right shape. As Guardiola once wrote of Zinédine Zidane: "He gets it, he passes it on, he asks for it again, he gets it again and he passes it on again. And meanwhile, the French are organised."

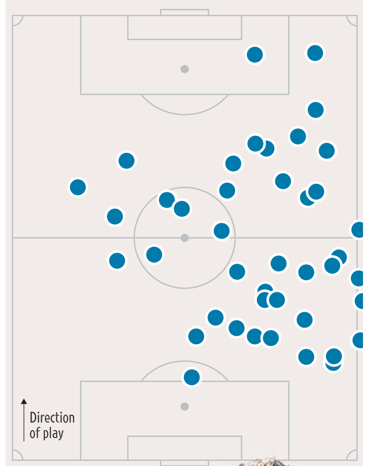
From a statistical point of view, two other aspects of Stones's new role stand out. In possession, he is finding himself in crossing positions much more often. Having attempted only 0.15 crosses per 90 minutes between August and February, in his past three games Stones has attempted 1.5. Off the ball, he has a little more license to slide in: he's made 2.3 tackles per 90 minutes in the past three games, compared with less than 0.9 before.

Naturally, Stones does have some flaws as a central midfielder. Because he's used to playing as a centre back, a much more static position, the busy, flitting movements with which natural "sixes" make themselves available for a pass do not come naturally to him. Against Southampton, it was noticeable that at times, when one of City's back three had the ball, he struggled to get out of the cover shadow of Southampton's forwards — the imaginary space behind a defender, from the point of view of the ball-carrier, into which a pass cannot be played.

Southampton had some success stopping City building through the lines in this way. Thomas Tuchel, who is no stranger to pressing with a front three against Guardiola's City, may well try to target that weakness when City face Bayern Munich tomorrow.

Rubén Sellés's team played really well for 44 minutes. Their gameplan was effective, they often passed their way through the City press and they generated opportunities. But the overall picture is less rosy: they have won none of their past five games, after two wins in Sellés's first three. The continued absence of the January signing Mislav Orsic, who had an impact for Croatia at the World Cup, remains a puzzling subplot in their perilous season.

STONES' TOUCHES V SOUTHAMPTON





Stones is in England's top three on form

DISSECTED: DE BRUYNE'S 100 ASSISTS IN PREMIER LEAGUE

ASSISTS BY OPPONENT

Southampton	10
Watford	9
Crystal Palace	7
Newcastle	7
Liverpool	6
West Ham	6
Aston Villa	5
Wolves	5
Bournemouth	4
Leicester	4
Man Utd	4
Arsenal	3
Brighton	3
Burnley	3
Everton	3
Sheffield Utd	3
Stoke City	3
West Brom	3
Norwich	2
Sunderland	2
Tottenham	2
Brentford	1
Chelsea	1
Fulham	1
Hull City	1
Middlesbrough	1
Swansea	1



ASSISTS BY SEASON

2013-14	1
2015-16	9
2016-17	18
2017-18	16
2018-19	2
2019-20	20
2020-21	12
2021-22	8
2022-23	14

Tuchel thinks he has magic touch to bring back 'old Mané'

Bayern's new coach takes on City knowing he must find way to get best out of several subdued stars, says **Constantin Eckner**

Thomas Tuchel was not gifted an easy start at Bayern Munich and even though they excelled at times to earn a 4-2 win in a potentially title-deciding match against Borussia Dortmund on April 1, he pointed out how his new side struggled in the build-up plays and made too many simple defensive errors.

In a sense, the former Chelsea head coach, whose team are away to Manchester City tomorrow in the first leg of their Champions League quarter-final, was proved right three days later when Bayern lost 2-1 to Freiburg at home in the German Cup quarter-final. On Saturday, Bayern managed to get revenge, beating Freiburg away in the Bundesliga 1-0 and maintaining their two-point-lead over Dortmund.

While Tuchel has joined a club who have a lot of elite players, not all of them have shown their best form this season. Four players, in particular, have become the subject of concern: Sadio Mané, Leroy Sané, João Cancelo and Ryan Gravenberch, with Mané arguably drawing the most attention because of the high expectations that came with him after moving from Liverpool last summer. The Senegal striker, who is 31 today, has not hit the heights he reached at Anfield, nor has he shown that he can be the focal point of Bayern's attack.

Tuchel seems to be aware of the struggles the £35 million signing has had and is determined to bring back the "old Mané". "There is no doubt that Sadio is a top player," Tuchel said. "He scored 20, 30 goals for Liverpool each year and was a key player. You need time to acclimatise after changing clubs even at that age."

Tuchel also confessed that the coaching staff had "to get players in positions where they feel most comfortable". That applies to Mané, who has not found a role that suits him perfectly. In the early stages of the season Julian Nagelsmann, who was dismissed last month, employed Mané up front in an attempt to fill the shoes of Robert Lewandowski, only to realise that Mané was not the kind of target man that Lewandowski had been for years.

Tuchel seemingly prefers to use the former Liverpool star on the left side in a 4-3-3. He granted Mané his first start under him against Freiburg on Saturday, but Mané produced only 22 accurate passes and one shot on target. Regardless of any discussion about where best to play him, he appears to have lost the confidence that once made him go into one-on-ones with any defender in the world and find all kinds of openings in defences.

"Strikers like Sadio are sensitive," Tuchel said. "That is the key. It is about trust and patience." Tuchel sees himself as a players' coach who finds ways to get the best out of each member of his team. He may have work to do but will not give up on Mané.

That can also be said about the former Manchester City winger Sané who, since his move to Bayern in 2020, has received a lot of criticism. "I want to protect him a bit because I believe it is not quite appropriate that



99
Assists for De Bruyne for Manchester City — his first was for Oscar in Chelsea's 2-0 win over Hull City in August 2013

81
Assists by De Bruyne from open play, with 12 coming from corners and another seven from free-kicks

4
Other players to reach 100 assists: R Giggs (162), C Fabregas (111), W Rooney (103), F Lampard (102)

237
Games it has taken him to reach 100 assists — fewer than any of the previous four players to reach the milestone

WHO HE ASSISTED

Sergio Agüero	19
Gabriel Jesus	14
Raheem Sterling	14
Phil Foden	7
Erling Haaland	7
Leroy Sané	4
Jack Grealish	3
Ilkay Gündogan	3
Riyad Mahrez	3
Bernardo Silva	3
David Silva	3
Fernandinho	2
Vincent Kompany	2
Aymeric Laporte	2
Nicolás Otamendi	2
Wilfried Bony	1
Fabian Delph	1
Rúben Dias	1
Aleksandar Kolarov	1
Benjamin Mendy	1
Oscar	1
Rodri	1
Rodrigo	1
John Stones	1
Yaya Touré	1
Kyle Walker	1
Pablo Zabaleta	1

we talk about Leroy during every press conference," Tuchel said.

Sané's first outing under Tuchel came against Dortmund and was one of his best performances this season. The left-footed Sané played as an inverted winger from the right-hand side and found space against Dortmund on numerous occasions.

The 27-year-old is undoubtedly technically gifted. What hinders him in making the step towards joining Europe's elite attacking midfielders is his inconsistent decision-making.

While Sané remains a long-term investment for Bayern, Cancelo's short-term future seems uncertain. He came on loan from City in January, because Bayern's sporting director, Hasan Salihamidzic, wanted to have an alternative to Benjamin Pavard, the right back.

Cancelo, 28, impressed in his very first game against Mainz but has since struggled to get a spot in the starting XI. Similar to his time under Pep Guardiola, the Portugal player is seen as an option for both wings, which may make it harder for him to fine-tune his game on one particular side of the field.

However, coaches, including Tuchel, like to have such versatile players. "I love João Cancelo," Tuchel said. "He has the highest quality in his left foot, in his right, in his passing game. He is a different type of player than Pavard. He is able to play on the left-hand side of the back four too."

Tuchel praised the precision of Cancelo's crosses as well as his shooting ability but did not really touch on his defensive work. Tuchel's 4-3-3 system requires defensively capable full backs, which should give Pavard an advantage over Cancelo.

Even though Cancelo has shown some promise and been publicly backed by Tuchel, the £62 million signing clause that is part of the loan agreement with City will not be triggered. However, if Cancelo can put in convincing performances until the end of the season, Bayern may be tempted to ask City to negotiate a potential transfer fee closer to his actual market value.

The sacking of Nagelsmann raised eyebrows and some might have even questioned whether the German powerhouse could be on the decline, but one reason Bayern's board made such a drastic and surprising move was their belief that Tuchel is more able to make their stars better. Only time will tell if the new head coach can get the likes of Mané, Sané and Cancelo back to their best.

MANCHESTER CITY V BAYERN MUNICH
TOMORROW, 8PM
TV BT SPORT 1 **RADIO** TALKSPORT

'Juventus breed winners. That is why I left Chelsea'

Samuel Iling-Junior tells **Alyson Rudd** that Italian giant's promise to nurture his development convinced him to leave London



There is something evocative about a British player joining Juventus. It is not a common occurrence and that is why, perhaps, those who make the leap are subject to extra scrutiny.

John Charles was an unmitigated success, the Wales player being named player of the season in his first campaign in Serie A in 1958, and that is why those who follow in his footsteps suffer a weight of expectation. His compatriot Ian Rush fared rather less well in his one season in 1987-1988 and suffered homesickness, saying "it's like living in a foreign country".

Samuel Iling-Junior smiles knowingly when I mention Rush. The winger has, he says, not been teased about how British players can falter in Turin — after all, the most recent high-profile transfer was that of Aaron Ramsey who scored five goals in 49 appearances, a contribution regarded as hugely disappointing in Italy.

It helped that Iling-Junior joined Juventus under the radar, signing three years ago when he was 16 having been at the Chelsea academy since he was eight. If there was pressure, then it was arguably on Juventus to come through with their promise of monitored development and the emphasis of a long-term project to nurture him.

More important, perhaps, is that it took the teenager practically no time at all to settle in and embrace Italian culture and learn a fourth language.

"I wasn't too scared because my homeland is France, my parents are from Congo and they speak Lingala French and I learnt that when I was growing up. So, it was more of a life choice, in the sense that I could learn a new language at the same time," he says. "My Italian is very good, *molto bene*.

"I am able to pick up phrases. In my first few weeks I feel I picked up the football phrases quite well, like 'man on' and then, as you go on, you pick up a lot from your team-mates.

"It's not hard to adapt, it's quite simple, classy. The key word for it is class. They are very good in the way they dress and the way you approach them, if you have manners, they'll have manners. And everyone likes to mind their business and it's a happy city, so it's good."

He smiles at the notion that there could be a different high point to his Juventus career than his Champions League debut against Benfica in October when he came on and created two goals in a 4-3 defeat.

"The dream of playing in the Champions League is what you talk about with your friends when you are younger. It's what you dream of, every time you step out on to the pitch I want to be at that level," he adds.

"I was quite relaxed because I didn't expect to come on so when I was told to get ready, we were losing at the time, so I didn't feel that much pressure. When I got on the ball I just did what I would normally do, dribble, or make a pass, and to be able to impact the game helped a lot."

It was a cameo that justified his decision to leave these shores but still, might it not have been simpler to find another, smaller English club?

"Yes, definitely, but that's the thing, in football you have to be fearless, you have to be in positions where you are not comfortable and taking this step, and I felt I had to make it to make sure I was able to play professional football after three years," he says.

"I have no bad blood with Chelsea. They will always have a special place in my heart, I grew up there, I was there from eight years old so of course they tried to keep me, but I just had my head tilted at Juventus. What they told me was about their projects, that if I'm doing well they will continue to push me, they'll help me with my development and individual sessions and constantly analyse my game.

"But mostly it was because of their history. You look at the amount of trophies they've won and the people who have played for the club. It's not a small club. It's easy to be attracted to a club like Juventus, they breed winners. So it was what I needed to do to become a winner."

This summer he hopes to be a key part of the England squad at the Under-20 World Cup partly to make sure no one on these shores has forgotten about him.

"It's an important summer, a chance to make a statement, to look to get into the senior squad, to have a chance to have the managers talking about me," he says.

His Italian experience ought to be an asset. It took him slightly longer than he expected to adapt to the slower, more considered pace of Italian football but being immersed in it has improved his contribution.

"Patience is the right word," he says. "There'll be times when you want to slow the game down because you're 1-0 up or 2-0 up and you don't need to rush the game but we can still create opportunities but in our own time, so we are still in control of the match with or without the ball. That's given maturity in my game.

"I do feel Italian already, but it will take a while to be fully Italian."



Iling-Junior follows Charles, Rush and Ramsey to Juventus

Lampard raises value of Sterling

Wolves 1
Nunes 31
Chelsea 0

RATINGS
Wolves (4-4-2) J Sá 6 — N Semedo 6, C Dawson 8, M Kilman 7, Toti 6 — D Podence 7 (J Moutinho 64min, 6), M Lemina 6 (A Traoré 74), J Gomes 7, M Nunes 8 (N Collins 90+6) — D Costa 6 (Hwang Hee-chan 63), M Cunha 7 (P Sarabia 75).
Booked Gomes, Lemina.
Chelsea (4-3-3) K Arrizabalaga 6 — R James 6, W Fofana 6 (T Chalobah 79), K Koulibaly 5, M Cucurella 4 (B Chilwell 67, 5) — C Gallagher 5, E Fernández 5, M Kovacic 5 — R Sterling 5 (M Mudryk 67, 5), K Havertz 5 (C Pulisic 61, 6), J Félix 5 (P-E Aubameyang 67, 5). **Booked** Cucurella, Sterling, Gallagher, Kovacic, Chilwell.
Referee P Bankes. **Attendance** 31,614.

TOM RODDY

CHRIS LEE/CHELSEA FC/GETTY IMAGES



4
Sterling's managers in 2022-2023 (Tuchel, Potter, Bruno, Lampard) having had one for the past six years (Guardiola)

Sterling may have been below par at Molineux but it will be at the Bernabéu where Lampard believes that he can excel

For anyone who witnessed Chelsea in action against Wolverhampton Wanderers on Saturday it will come as no surprise to learn that Frank Lampard told his players to quickly turn their attention to the tall task of Real Madrid this week.

Looking back would not have made for pretty viewing, but that may well be the theme of this week. Here is a helping hand from history: the spirit of 2012 summoned at Stamford Bridge. Let the highlights reel roll.

Lampard's return as caretaker manager has created a romanticism and nostalgia around the club, a narrative that a member of Chelsea's first Champions League-winning team can ensure history repeats in similar circumstances.

"Part of that was we parked the bus at the Nou Camp and managed to hang on for our dear lives," Lampard said, referring to the draw at Barcelona in the semi-final when Chelsea had a mere 17 per cent possession.

"There are so many things, fate in different moments. But we did have a huge desire and a big character and a level of talent in a group that had been striving for years to win a Champions League."

While it is tempting to draw parallels, the contrasts could not be more stark. At Molineux there was more evidence of a team working as individuals rather than a unit, an attack comfortably dealt with by the determined Craig Dawson in the heart of Wolves's defence, and a Chelsea back four that Matheus Nunes and Matheus Cunha pulled apart regularly.

Real Madrid and Karim Benzema could not have been concerned by what they saw. But Carlo Ancelotti would be foolish not to think that Chelsea will up their game at the Bernabéu on Wednesday because history suggests they could rise to the occasion.

Under Graham Potter, even with poor form in the league, the players regularly lifted levels on the European stage. Of Potter's 31 matches in charge, Chelsea won seven in 22 Premier League games, but five in seven Champions League games. What is the motivation? That famous music or the head coach?

The players have listened to four head coaches this season. Lampard is the latest and he will look to experience. Raheem Sterling will be among the figures tasked with dragging the team through this highly testing period. The challenge is clear: Champions League or bust. The domestic season has fizzled out, which was evident at Molineux. Eyes were clearly on Madrid.

As with a lot of the players on Saturday, Sterling was well below par. He attempted only two dribbles, created one chance and recorded zero shots. In the Champions League, however, the former Liverpool and Manchester City forward has an impressive return of 50 goal contributions in 81 appearances.

"He's been one of the best wingers in the world for a long time — at times, maybe in some people's opinion, the best," Lampard said. "[I] can't remember how many times I've referenced [him] to young wingers. When I was here previously at Chelsea, at Derby and Everton, [I said] actually: 'Watch Raheem Sterling and see why he scores 20 goals a season plus.' So I have the highest feeling for him in that sense."

Playing under four different coaches in the space of nine months, at a new club, could well have been unsettling for Sterling. He has operated in a range of positions — striker, wingback, left forward, right forward, false nine. His season has also been disrupted by injuries.

"I've spoken to him a little bit in the past couple of days [and] we also have to get the right team structure to make it best for the players and then drive them," Lampard said. "I haven't watched every Chelsea game this season — at times I was obviously doing my thing [at Everton] — but he certainly is a player of a high level and a high competence level and [with an] understanding of the game that [facing Madrid] won't faze him.

"In fact, he's risen to games like that before in the past, so that's something we'll obviously rely on in terms of this, because some elements of the squad are maybe a bit younger. Raheem has been there and done it and there's a history of producing."

Others at Chelsea have, too. Mateo Kovacic has won the Champions League four times. Kai Havertz scored the winner in the final two years ago. N'Golo Kanté, a member of that team, was left in London over the weekend by Lampard in preparation for the trip to Madrid. History tells him how important Kanté can be. But Lampard will not look back too far thinking it will affect the future.

"Probably on the outside, in a romantic sort of way [people think it can]," Lampard said. "In football terms, our games will be to [against] Real Madrid and, if we could progress, it's Bayern Munich or Man City, and these are practical things which are really tough.

"We only can focus now on the game on Wednesday. We know it will be challenging. I don't think the history has a big effect on it, but I understand the romantic idea. Wouldn't we all love to see it again? We have to work towards that."

Watkins channels Cavani as Villa start dreaming of Europe

CHARLOTTE DUNCKER

Aston Villa 2
Traoré 48, Watkins 90+5
Nott'm Forest 0

RATINGS
Aston Villa (4-4-2): E Martínez 7 — A Young 7, E Konsa 7, T Mings 7, Á Moreno 7 — L Bailey 6 (B Traoré 28, 7), D Luiz 7, J McGinn 7, J Ramsey 6 — O Watkins 7, E Buendía 6 (L Dendoncker 75)
Booked Moreno, Konsa, Watkins.
Nottingham Forest (3-4-2-1): K Navas 6 – J Worrall 6 (T Awoinyi 65), Felipe 7, M Niakhaté 5 — N Williams 5, J Shelvey 4 (O Mangala 65), C Kouyaté 5 (R Freuler 32, 6), H Toffolo 5 — Danilo 6 (A Ayew 78), M Gibbs-White 5 — B Johnson 5.
Booked Shelvey, Toffolo, Mangala, Awoniyi.
Referee A Taylor. **Attendance** 42,076.

After their win against Nottingham Forest, a sixth victory in seven Premier League games, Unai Emery admitted that his Aston Villa squad are having to constantly adjust their targets and set their sights higher.

When the head coach arrived in October, Villa were 14th, only three points clear of the relegation zone, and the first target was safety. That then turned into breaking into the top ten and now, having moved up to sixth, they have their eyes on securing a European spot.

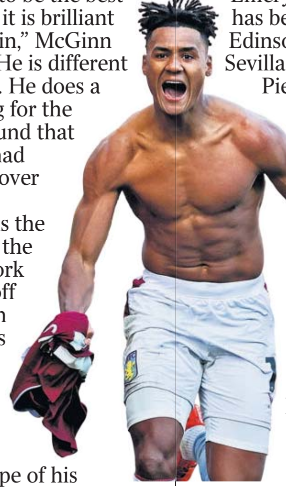
Ollie Watkins may well be adjusting his goal target too. Villa's second on Saturday, a cute chip, took Watkins to within two of his best Premier League goalscoring season of 14, with eight games still to play.

Others have also been revitalised under Emery: John McGinn has rediscovered his best form, Tyrone Mings is again the dominant figure at the back who went missing under Steven Gerrard, and Douglas Luiz has become a force in midfield.

But it is Watkins who is the poster boy for the dramatic change in form since the Spaniard took charge. In ten starts under Gerrard this season, Watkins scored only once; in 15 starts under Emery, he has ten goals, including nine in the past 11 games.

"He is on fire. He gives himself the best possible chance to be the best player he can be and it is brilliant to see the form he is in," McGinn said of Watkins, 27. "He is different class off the park too. He does a lot of selfless running for the team. Now he has found that wee finish he never had before, the wee dink over the keeper."

That "wee finish" as the Villa captain put it is the profit of extensive work with Emery on and off the training pitch. On it, the head coach has been helping him with the timing of his runs, his positioning on the shoulder of the last defender and the shape of his body when he receives a pass. Off the pitch, Antonio Rodríguez Saravia, a performance coach at the club, has been working with Watkins. Under Emery's instruction, the striker has been shown videos of Edinson Cavani, the former Sevilla forward Carlos Bacca and Pierre-Emerick Aubameyang, so he can learn from their movement. They are all forwards whom Emery has worked with in the past and operate in a way that he believes to be effective in his system.



Watkins has scored nine goals in his past 11 games

Watkins' willingness to take tips from the footage has impressed Emery, who has amused the player with his demands to "not go there" (outside the box), in order to poach more goals. Watkins has taken fewer touches and made fewer runs as a result of Emery's advice, but his goal return speaks for itself.

The striker is one of the key reasons Villa find themselves dreaming of a return to European football. "Other results have gone in our favour in terms of chasing European places so it's a nice feeling to get three points, control your job and see where everyone else is," McGinn said. "Eight games left and we have to be almost perfect to get to Europe, but we have given ourselves a great chance."

Newcastle United are up next at Villa Park on Saturday — a test of just how far this team can go under Emery. But with a newfound confidence in their back line and a striker in red-hot form, they will believe they have what it takes to secure one of those European spots.

Marsch out of running to take over at Leicester

Leicester City 0

Bournemouth 1
Billing 40

RATINGS
Leicester City (4-2-3-1): D Iversen 7 — T Castagne 5, D Amartey 5, W Faes 5, V Kristiansen 5 — B Soumaré 5, W Ndidi 6 (D Praet 80min) — R Pereira 5 (K Iheanacho 57, 5), J Maddison 5, H Barnes 5 (Tetê 71) — J Vardy 5 (P Daka 57, 5).
Bournemouth (4-2-3-1): Neto 6 — A Smith 6, J Stephens 7, C Mepham 7, L Kelly 7 — J Rothwell 6 (L Cook 59, 6), J Lerma 7 — R Christie 6, P Billing 8, D Ouattara 5 (M Tavernier 38, 7) — D Solanke 7 (A Semenyo 87). **Booked** Rothwell, Kelly, Smith.
Referee D Coote. **Attendance** 32,094.

CHARLOTTE DUNCKER, HAMZAH KHALIQUE-LOONAT

Jesse Marsch is out of the running to replace Brendan Rodgers as the manager of Leicester City.

The former Leeds United head coach had been a leading contender for the job after holding positive talks on Thursday but it is understood that he has withdrawn from the process.

It is thought that the 49-year-old American made his decision after watching Leicester lose 1-0 to Bournemouth on Saturday, a result which left them 19th in the Premier League, two points from safety.

Leicester are still considering whether to bring in a temporary manager until the end of the season or stick with the caretakers, Adam Sadler and Mike Stowell. Rafa Benítez and Sam Allardyce are among the candidates should they decide on the former option.

Rodgers, who was sacked last week, had spent more than four years at Leicester and won the FA Cup for the first time in the club's history in 2021. The Northern Irishman also twice almost took them into the Champions League, yet the Championship is looking an increasingly likely prospect for next season.

Around the King Power Stadium on Saturday were puzzled faces, fans trying to rationalise how a group of players clearly capable of better performances have ended up as relegation fodder.

Jamie Vardy — 36 and playing as the lone striker — was isolated and his passenger status meant that the Bournemouth centre backs, Chris Mepham and Jack Stephens, could squeeze him and push forward, which allowed Bournemouth, as a team, to press further up the pitch. In his 58 minutes on the pitch, Vardy completed three of six passes and Leicester had five shots.

STEPHEN WHITE/ CAMERASPORT/GETTY IMAGES



Stephens keeps a close eye on Daka, who made a big difference as a second-half substitute for Leicester by joining Iheanacho up front and liberating Maddison

The home side's inability to move upfield meant that James Maddison was barely involved, and felt obliged to come deep to get on the ball. When he did finally get a touch, it proved to be decisive — but not in the way he would have intended, as he gifted Bournemouth the winning goal. Maddison's errant pass in his own half went straight to Philip Billing, who honed in on goal before slipping the ball past Daniel Iversen.

For most of the first half there was space out wide for Vardy to attack, but very little space around the centre backs, or between them and Jefferson Lerma, the visiting team's deepest midfielder. However, once Patson Daka and Kelechi Iheanacho came on, that dynamic shifted. In their 32 minutes on the field, Leicester attempted nine shots. When they held the ball in their defensive third, Daka took up a conventional No 10 position, just as Maddison had, but once the ball moved upfield, he joined Iheanacho, creating a front two.

With a strike pairing through the middle, Leicester were able to pin back the Bournemouth defence. Consequently, Maddison could move more freely, dribbling into the spaces, with Lloyd Kelly unable to track him without creating a potential one-on-one situation for his centre backs. Leicester were still short of confidence but at least began to look as if they could threaten.

Getting Maddison involved is a must if Leicester are to stay up. He already has nine goals and six assists in the league this season. As Leicester's season has unravelled, so has his involvement in their play.

Unsurprisingly the more Leicester struggle, the less involved he is, and the less involved Maddison is, the poorer Leicester play.

Maddison's problem in the first half was that he had limited space in which to operate. Playing as the No 10 in a 4-2-3-1 means it is easier for opponents to step up and put pressure on him, especially if the striker is isolated. But once Iheanacho and Daka came on in the 58th minute, Maddison was no longer so isolated and Leicester were able to advance more aggressively; by occupying the Bournemouth back four more effectively, they created space for Maddison, which brought him into play more often and in turn helped the strikers.

In terms of touches, there was not much between the strikers — Vardy had 13, Daka eight and Iheanacho 14 — but the change in structure at least enabled Leicester to play more aggressively. They need to continue in that vein in their final eight matches.

WINTER'S WEEKEND WONDERS



Chief Football Writer on intelligent coaches and Rashford's workload

Fuss-free Howe has revitalised Newcastle

1 No fuss, no drama, no chasing the limelight, simply the sustained pursuit of Champions League football. Eddie Howe just does things right. He has undoubtedly been given some good players to work with, such as Kieran Trippier, Bruno Guimarães and Alexander Isak, but he has developed those already there. Newcastle United look fitter, smarter, are great to watch and given extra threat by Howe's in-game management. It's not simply Howe. Jason Tindall, Graeme Jones, Simon Weatherstone and Stephen Purches form a loyal, knowledgeable back-room staff. Tindall is tasked with dealing with the fourth official and the opposing coaching staff, while Howe focuses on the game. Howe's clever.

Stylish Kompany will make welcome return

2 Securing promotion back to the Premier League with seven games to spare is impressive enough. But it is the way Vincent Kompany, Burnley's alchemist, has done it: in style, making light of financial issues such as using parachute money to address a loan and coping with losing important players such as Nick Pope, Ben Mee and James Tarkowski. Kompany's done it by bringing in younger players, rejuvenating team, squad and club, making tactical tweaks like unleashing Josh Brownhill, and showing strength during some early disappointing results. Free-flowing Burnley, and deep-thinking Kompany, will be welcome additions to the Premier League next season.

PETER NICHOLLS/REUTERS



Grealish's fine post-Word Cup form continued with a goal against Southampton

Decisive Grealish goes from strength to strength

3 Jack Grealish just gets better and better. Few players have been in such creative, effective form since returning from the World Cup in December. Manchester City's left winger played the pass to Kevin De Bruyne for Erling Haaland's first against Southampton, and fashioned the Norwegian's athletic second with a magnificent cross. In between, Grealish struck instantly with his right foot after his left-footed shot was saved. He's become more decisive, more tactically aware, responding to Pep Guardiola's instructions and demands, and providing a fine example by showing how much he enjoys playing.

Rashford suffers due to long, gruelling season

4 When will football learn? The fear was that Marcus Rashford's body would wilt in this gruelling season for Manchester United and England. The game against Everton was his 52nd of the season. Erik ten Hag rightly lamented the schedule but could also consider why he didn't remove Rashford when United went two clear. Ten Hag said he wanted to see Rashford in tandem with Anthony Martial. But Everton are hardly prolific. United, and football, ran the risk. And Rashford suffers.

Time for referees to be given their voice

5 The model of restraint when others would have raged. Kaoru Mitoma, the Brighton winger, was fouled by Spurs' Pierre-Emile Hojbjerg. It should have been a penalty. PGMOL apologised when its contrition should also have included other decisions that went against them. The sooner the deliberations between VAR and referee are broadcast the more transparent the process will be. The sooner referees explain decisions to TV after the game the more credible and human they will appear.

From dour to dynamic: How Burnley pulled off improbable



Vincent Kompany has earned promotion despite starting pre-season with only ten senior players, says **Gregor Robertson**

Last Saturday, Burnley supporters awoke to news that The Royal Dyche, the pub named after the former manager Sean Dyche in 2018, had been renamed The Royal Kompany, in honour of his successor, Vincent Kompany.

An image was doing the rounds on social media, which showed Justine Bedford, the landlady, standing outside the Yorkshire Street establishment, holding aloft a claret-and-blue scarf adorned with the former Manchester City captain's name, brand new signage above the door overhead.

All an elaborate April fool, of course, thanks to Photoshop and Bedford's artistic — and slightly mischievous — wife, Steph. Dyche's decade-long legacy remains firmly intact in Lancashire but, after securing promotion from the Sky Bet Championship at the first time of asking, it would be fair to say that Kompany will never have to buy a drink in Burnley again.

Beating Middlesbrough 2-1 on Friday brought confirmation of Burnley's return to the Premier League with seven games to spare. The title will follow in due course. Burnley could still surpass the record 106-point tally of the Championship era, set by Steve Coppell's Reading in 2005-06. This is a team that will go down as one of the second-tier greats.

Kompany's appointment on June 14, after three years as player and manager of Anderlecht, piqued considerable excitement at Turf Moor but not even the former Belgium defender envisaged success this fast, and on this scale. "I don't think any of us expected it to go this well," Kompany said. "The points are one thing, but I think it's the way we achieved those results as well.

"We knew for sure we had to rebuild; we knew an existing core of the team was leaving; we knew we had to get new players in who would create new values and assets for the club. There was a plan for, within two or three years, putting ourselves in a position where we could get promoted. Things went a little bit quicker than that."

When Kompany addressed his squad on June 21, this pillar of City's defence for more than a decade told his players that "his passion is scoring goals". Burnley, he said, would be a team with a plan to score from every phase of play, be that a defensive throw-in, a corner or when the ball is at their goalkeeper's feet.

"Just bear with me," Kompany said. "It might take three, four, five months before we are able to execute it without thinking… but I think we might enjoy it."

It has been a thrilling ride and even taking into consideration the gulf in quality between the top flight and second tier, the stylistic shift has been remarkable. Last season under Dyche, Burnley ranked bottom for possession (39.1 per cent), passes and passing accuracy. Only Norwich City, who finished bottom, scored fewer goals.

This season, under Kompany, Burnley have enjoyed the highest average share of possession in the Championship (64.3 per cent), play on average 240 more passes per game and have outscored every other team in the division.

Without the ball, they have been transformed from an obdurate, low-block side to one of the most effective high-press teams in the league, conceding the fewest goals (30) in the division as a result.

Long hours in the meeting room at Burnley's Barnfield Training Centre during pre-season, with the help of Richard Bredice, a performance analyst Kompany brought from City to Anderlecht in 2019, made it feel like "being back at school", the veteran striker Ashley Barnes, 33, said.

On one of Burnley's training pitches, extra lines were added in the summer to dissect the pitch into different zones, help the players find the "half spaces" many elite teams seek to exploit and better understand their positional roles.

Kompany has made no secret of the influence of Pep Guardiola, the Manchester City manager, on his principles of play. "He found a language for football that I understood and from there I could start writing my own story," he has said.

Like City, in possession Burnley's nominal 4-3-3 formation becomes a 3-2-5 or even 2-3-5 as they seek to dominate possession, work the ball up the pitch and create overloads in the final third. Yet the sight of Burnley's goalkeeper, Arijanet Muric, and their central defenders, Taylor Harwood-Bellis and Jordan Beyer, risking possession while constructing attacks, and of their full backs, Ian Maatsen and Connor Roberts or Vitinho, stepping into midfield has been a "culture shock" for some fans, says Joe Redmond, founder of the TurfCast podcast.

"There are still some that sit by me who shout, 'Just boot it!' " Redmond, 35, who has been going to Turf Moor with his dad since he was in a baby carrier, says. "But I don't know what more they need to see: we've created so many chances playing this way. It's been the most enjoyable season of my lifetime."



RICHARD SELLERS/PA

Kompany, left, and Cork enjoy the win that secured a return to the top flight at the first time of asking

26

Belgium will be the 26th country to supply a Premier League manager with Kompany winning promotion

CHASING HISTORY

Burnley would finish with the second-most points in a Championship season at their current rate, but need to win every remaining game to break Reading's record

Points / Projected / Maximum

Season	Points
Reading (2005-06)	106
Sunderland (2006-07)	88
West Brom (2007-08)	81
Wolves (2008-09)	90
Newcastle (2009-10)	102
QPR (2010-11)	88
Reading (2011-12)	89
Cardiff (2012-13)	87
Leicester (2013-14)	102
B'mouth (2014-15)	90
Burnley (2015-16)	93
Newcastle (2016-17)	94
Wolves (2017-18)	99
Norwich (2018-19)	94
Leeds (2019-20)	93
Norwich (2020-21)	97
Fulham (2021-22)	90
Burnley (2022-23)	87 (Projected 102, Maximum 108)

Kompany says the value of the culture he inherited at Barnfield, where the walls are still adorned with Dyche's mantra of "Legs, Hearts, Minds", cannot be overlooked. "As a new manager, you want to put your own stamp on things, but I wanted to protect at all costs the discipline here, the work rate and the togetherness of this club," Kompany, whose No 2, Craig Bellamy, has spoken of regular 14-hour working days, said. "That type of culture takes so long to create, and it's something that was already here before me."

Burnley's leadership group consists overwhelmingly of Dyche-signed players: the captain, Jack Cork, vice-captain, Josh Brownhill and Barnes have been joined by Josh Cullen, the former West Ham United midfielder who Kompany signed for Anderlecht in 2020 and brought to Turf Moor. The scale of Burnley's summer overhaul, meanwhile, makes Kompany's achievement all the more impressive. When the squad returned for pre-season, they had only ten senior players, with some still on extended breaks after post-season internationals.

Relegation forced the club's owners, ALK Capital, to repay a significant proportion of a £65 million loan taken out when buying the club in December 2020, so a first-year parachute payment of £42 million was effectively wiped out. About £70 million was raised from the sales of Dwight McNeil, Nathan Collins, Maxwel Cornet and Nick Pope, of which about £30 million was reinvested on 16 players, all but three of whom were aged 23 or under.

Kompany raided the Belgian league for five recruits. Cullen has been the heartbeat in midfield. Anass Zaroury, a £3.5 million signing from Charleroi, has had a hand in 11 goals. Manuel Benson, who arrived for a similar fee from Antwerp, has had a hand in ten.

The loan market has been utilised brilliantly, too. Harwood-Bellis, the England Under-21 defender, has thrived on loan from Manchester City. Chelsea's Maatsen, 21, stepping from left back into midfield with unerring ease has been one of the most important cogs in Kompany's machine. Nathan Tella, 23, a former Arsenal trainee brought in on loan from Southampton, has scored 17 goals in a forward line brimming with pace and panache — all of whom have been aided by Bellamy.

Even when Burnley won only one of their opening five games, Redmond says it felt like a matter of time before the team "clicked"; he points to the 5-1 thrashing of Wigan Athletic in August as the moment when the potential of Kompany's team began to crystallise.

Lingering unease among supporters, owing to ALK's leveraged buy-out in 2020, briefly resurfaced when Burnley were placed under transfer embargo for failing to submit their accounts on time last month. The club blamed the error on a change of auditors and, given the way they have navigated relegation, more supporters are willing to give their US owners the benefit of doubt than not.

Quite where Kompany's team will rank in the pantheon of second-tier champions remains to be seen. Yet 12 months on from Dyche's departure — on Good Friday — one thing is clear: the club that returns to the Premier League, aiming to bloody the noses of the elite again, is unrecognisable.

The Centurions

They're both on 100 points with 106 goals but Wrexham and Notts County face off today knowing only one is assured of promotion, writes **Gregor Robertson**

The biggest game in non-League history? It is certainly hard to think of a contest between two teams quite so closely matched, relentless in their pursuit of promotion and, yes, expensively assembled in the fifth tier — the apex of non-League's pyramid.

Two storied old clubs, Wrexham and Notts County, are tied on a remarkable 100 points at the summit of the National League before today's sell-out clash at the Racecourse Stadium. Both are on course to obliterate almost every record at this level, but only one can claim the title and the solitary automatic promotion place.

Hollywood-owned Wrexham, who lost for the first time in 29 league games on Good Friday, slipped to second on goal difference as a result but still have the benefit of five games left to County's four. The Red Dragons are aiming to end a 15-year exile from the Football League — which, after years of financial worries and decline, would no doubt create some gloriously saccharine content for the hit Disney documentary *Welcome To Wrexham.*

A win for County, however — who like Wrexham are 25 points ahead of third-place Woking — would wrestle their fate back into their own hands, boost hopes of avoiding the angst and uncertainty of a fourth consecutive play-off campaign at this level and make for an even more thrilling denouement.

"Clash of the titans, star players on both teams, passionate fanbases — all the ingredients are there for a great story," Luke Williams, the County head coach, says. "When people watch football they want to feel emotional. They want to see theatre and drama. We're fortunate to be involved in an occasion like this. We are determined to win. But we have to enjoy it."

As Phil Parkinson, the Wrexham manager, says: "It's been a date in everybody's calendar. A unique season — relentless, in terms of the results both teams have been able to produce.

"We've driven each other on. They've attacked every game like we have. When you start a season you set out to be a part of games that mean something. But listen, neither team wants to be in the play-offs. We aim to finish the job off."

Both teams had lost only twice all season before Friday, have plundered more than a century of goals and, while both managers admit that records are for reflecting upon only once something has been achieved, a skim through the history books confirms that this has been a season like no other. Steve Evans's title-winning Crawley Town team registered the record points tally at this level: 105 in 2010-11. Both teams could easily surpass that total.

Most wins? Aldershot Town (2007-08), Crawley Town (2010-11) and Fleetwood Town (2011-12) all won 31 times en route to the league title. Wrexham have already won 31 games and County are one behind.

Most goals? Barnet (1990-91) and Hereford United (2003-04) scored 103 goals on their way to the title and both Wrexham and County, tied on 106 goals, have already smashed that record thanks, in no small part, to their talismanic strikers.

Wrexham's Paul Mullin has bagged 34 league goals while in Friday's 3-0 win over Wealdstone, County's Macaulay Langstaff hit his 41st, a record for the competition. But he says: "I think both of us would admit we don't care who wins the golden boot as long as we get promoted," says Langstaff, who was a £50,000 steal from Gateshead last summer.

Langstaff — who is not even County's penalty taker — scored in the 1-0 win when the teams met at Meadow Lane in October. Wrexham's response was to win 23 times in a 28-game unbeaten run, while County slipped to a late defeat against Dagenham & Redbridge on February 25 and fell further behind after a draw with Bromley a week later.

It promises to be thrilling encounter but how healthy is it for the league and, indeed, the pyramid?

Long before the actors Ryan Reynolds and Rob McElhenney rode into Wrexham, soaring owner investment, the absence of meaningful salary cost control protocols and just two promotion spots had created a bottleneck at this level. Arguably, the top half of the National League is now as good, and often better, than the bottom half of the league above.

Four teams are promoted from League Two at present, with only two relegated. The prospect of a third National League promotion place has been raised in negotiations over a renewed financial settlement between the Premier League and the EFL, whose leadership accepts that its arguments for reducing the cliff edge between the Premier League and the Championship apply equally to the National League and League Two.

For change to be ratified, at least half of the 72 EFL clubs — including at least half of the Championship clubs — would need to be in favour. It is a debate that has been re-energised this extraordinary season.

"I hope for the sake of the division it happens because it is a strong league, and there are some good sides here. But we all knew the rules from the start, so we're not going to moan about it now," Parkinson says.

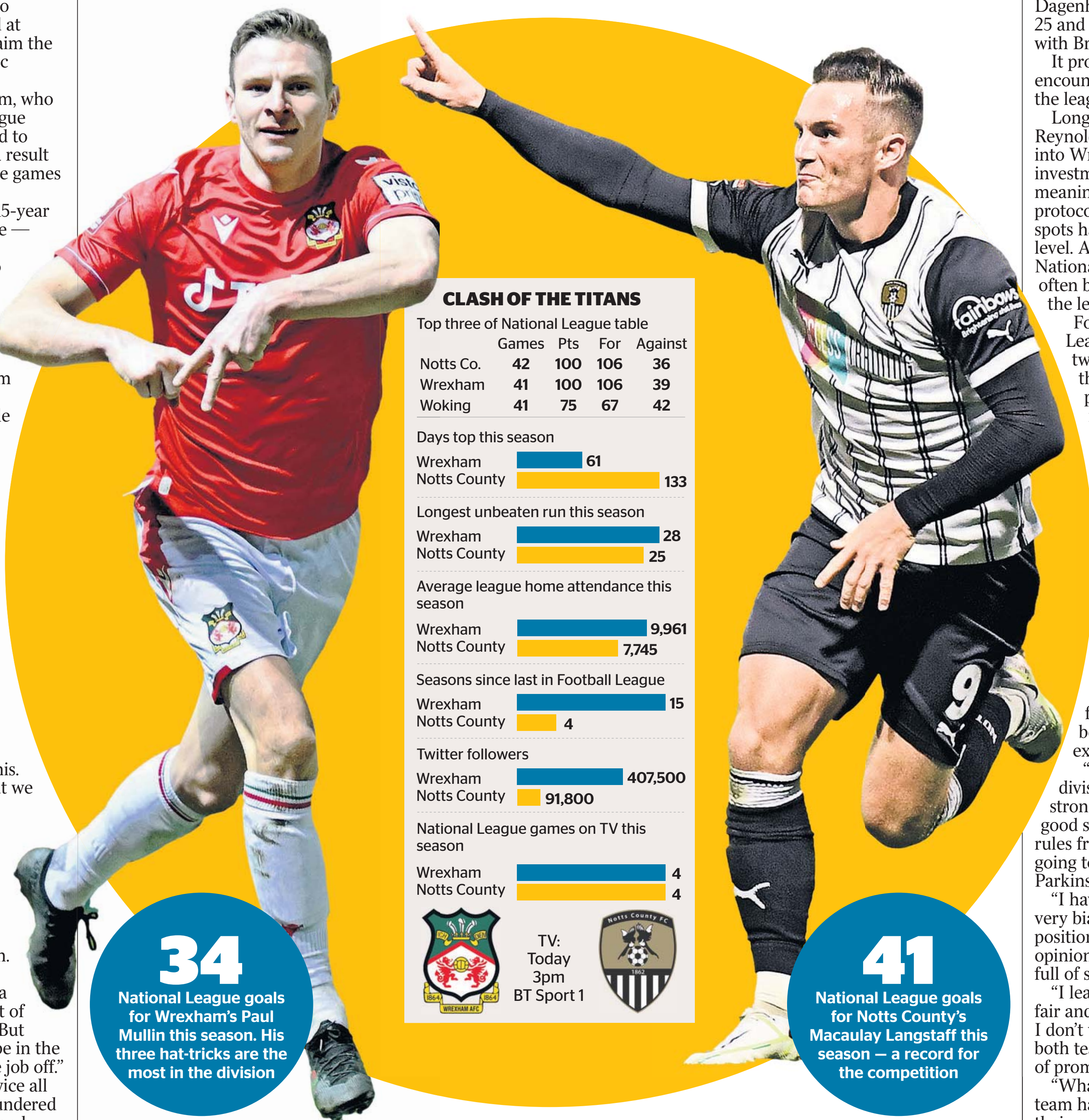
"I have my personal opinion — it's very biased, because we're in a great position but still not top — but my opinion should be taken with a fist full of salt," Williams says.

"I learnt very young that life is not fair and all people are not equal. I don't think anyone could doubt that both teams are thoroughly worthy of promotion.

"What we're looking at now is one team having to pass an exam and their coursework over the whole term having no relevance.

"We have to look at it as a blessing that we have two opportunities to get out of the division.

"I don't think there's ever been a player on an open-top bus sulking because they didn't win the title."



34 National League goals for Wrexham's Paul Mullin this season. His three hat-tricks are the most in the division

41 National League goals for Notts County's Macaulay Langstaff this season — a record for the competition

CLASH OF THE TITANS

Top three of National League table

	Games	Pts	For	Against
Notts Co.	42	100	106	36
Wrexham	41	100	106	39
Woking	41	75	67	42

	Wrexham	Notts County
Days top this season	61	133
Longest unbeaten run this season	28	25
Average league home attendance this season	9,961	7,745
Seasons since last in Football League	15	4
Twitter followers	407,500	91,800
National League games on TV this season	4	4

TV: Today 3pm BT Sport 1

Promotion and relegation picture will become much clearer today

EFL PREVIEW
KIT SHEPARD

The Sky Bet Championship's top two meet at Turf Moor today, but the game is much bigger for Sheffield United. Paul Heckingbottom's side need 11 points from their final seven games to go up automatically with Burnley, who will be five from the title if they win.

Middlesbrough have been in third for much of 2023 but dropped to fourth after consecutive losses, and will look to respond away to Bristol City. Luton Town, the new third-placed team, face lowly Blackpool.

Norwich City's clash with Rotherham United is crucial at both ends of the table. The Norfolk outfit bolstered their play-off hopes by beating Blackburn Rovers on Friday, while Rotherham can further ease their relegation fears after seeing off West Bromwich Albion.

Similarly, Blackburn are targeting a top-six finish but have a tricky fixture away to Huddersfield Town, who have won three straight matches under Neil Warnock to move out of the bottom three. Preston North End, another play-off contender, also face a relegation-threatened side in Reading.

In League One, Forest Green Rovers will be relegated if they lose away to Wycombe Wanderers, Milton Keynes Dons avoid defeat and Oxford United win. Their only solace is that Oxford, who are away to Port Vale, have not won since January.

Near the top, Sheffield Wednesday are running out of time to reverse their slump. They have not won in six to drop out of the top two and host a struggling Accrington Stanley, who got their first win in seven on Friday.

Ipswich Town are going for nine wins and ten clean sheets in a row away to Cheltenham Town, while leaders Plymouth Argyle host Lincoln City. Derby County, outside the play-offs on goal difference, host MK Dons. Peterborough United, in sixth, take on Exeter City, and Bolton Wanderers, in fifth, play 22nd-placed Cambridge United.

Leyton Orient could be just three points from League Two promotion if they beat Harrogate Town at home.

Northampton Town can stay second by beating Gillingham, while Carlisle United are in third and travel to Walsall. Stevenage, level on points with Carlisle but without a win in four, have an awkward trip to Hartlepool United, who despite sitting second-bottom, have won two in a row. Stockport County's strong form means they could enter the top three if they defeat Newport County and teams above slip up.

Salford City are in striking distance of Bradford City and Mansfield Town, and could enter the play-offs if they get a result away to AFC Wimbledon.

Rochdale, scrapping to keep their 102-year run in the Football League alive, are six points from safety but have won both games since Jim McNulty took over. Another away to Mansfield Town would leave Hartlepool, Colchester United, Crawley Town and Harrogate looking over their shoulders.

Premier League

		P	HOME W	D	L	F	A	AWAY W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
▶	1 Arsenal	30	12	2	1	42	18	11	2	2	30	11	43	73
▶	2 Man City	29	12	1	1	47	14	9	3	3	28	13	48	67
▶	3 Newcastle	29	8	5	1	23	9	7	6	2	25	12	27	56
▲	4 Man United	29	11	3	1	27	8	6	2	6	17	29	7	56
▼	5 Tottenham	30	11	0	4	31	17	5	5	5	24	25	13	53
▲	6 Aston Villa	30	8	2	5	25	19	6	3	6	16	21	1	47
▼	7 Brighton	28	7	3	4	25	14	6	4	4	27	22	16	46
▶	8 Liverpool	29	9	4	1	36	11	3	4	8	14	24	15	44
▼	9 Brentford	30	7	6	2	29	16	3	7	5	18	24	7	43
▶	10 Fulham	29	6	4	5	21	21	5	2	7	18	19	-1	39
▶	11 Chelsea	30	6	5	4	16	12	4	4	7	13	19	-2	39
▶	12 Crystal Palace	30	5	5	5	14	19	3	4	8	15	21	-11	33
▶	13 Wolves	30	6	2	7	13	19	2	5	8	11	23	-18	31
▶	14 West Ham	29	6	3	6	19	19	2	3	9	8	20	-12	30
▲	15 Bournemouth	30	5	4	6	15	18	3	2	10	13	38	-29	30
▲	16 Leeds	30	5	5	5	21	24	2	3	10	18	30	-15	29
▼	17 Everton	30	5	3	7	13	17	1	6	8	10	26	-20	27
▼	18 Nottingham Forest	30	5	6	4	19	18	1	3	11	5	36	-30	27
▶	19 Leicester	30	3	3	9	17	20	4	1	10	23	32	-12	25
▶	20 Southampton	30	2	4	9	15	28	4	1	10	9	23	-27	23

Sky Bet Championship

		P	HOME W	D	L	F	A	AWAY W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
▶	1 Burnley (P)	39	14	6	0	43	13	11	6	2	33	17	46	87
▶	2 Sheffield United	39	12	3	4	36	17	11	4	5	24	16	27	76
▲	3 Luton Town	40	8	8	4	26	19	10	6	4	22	16	13	68
▼	4 Middlesbrough	40	11	6	3	37	16	9	1	10	35	32	24	67
▶	5 Millwall	40	10	6	4	29	17	7	5	8	19	23	8	62
▶	6 Blackburn	39	13	1	5	25	16	6	3	11	18	29	-2	61
▶	7 Norwich	40	8	4	8	27	23	9	5	6	27	19	12	60
▲	8 Preston	40	6	6	8	17	23	10	5	5	22	21	-5	59
▼	9 Coventry	40	9	6	5	24	21	6	7	7	23	20	6	58
▼	10 West Brom	39	10	6	4	26	15	5	5	9	22	27	6	56
▲	11 Sunderland	40	6	7	7	28	29	8	6	6	29	21	7	55
▼	12 Watford	40	9	6	5	30	20	5	7	8	17	25	2	55
▲	13 Bristol City	40	8	6	6	25	19	5	7	8	23	29	0	52
▼	14 Stoke	40	6	5	9	24	23	8	4	8	29	24	6	51
▶	15 Swansea	40	8	4	8	30	28	5	7	8	24	31	-5	50
▶	16 Birmingham	40	7	5	8	23	21	6	5	9	21	30	-7	49
▶	17 Hull	40	7	5	8	21	26	5	8	7	26	31	-10	49
▲	18 Rotherham	39	8	5	6	33	24	2	9	9	11	28	-8	44
▲	19 Cardiff	39	6	6	8	18	20	5	3	11	15	25	-12	42
▲	20 Huddersfield	40	7	5	8	21	23	4	4	12	18	34	-18	42
▼	21 QPR	40	6	4	10	20	29	5	5	10	18	33	-24	42
▼	22 *Reading	40	10	5	5	29	22	3	3	14	13	38	-18	41
▶	23 Blackpool	40	5	6	9	25	29	3	5	12	17	35	-22	35
▶	24 **Wigan	40	4	6	10	15	32	4	7	9	19	28	-26	34

*deducted 6pts. **deducted 3pts for breach of financial regulations

Sky Bet League One

		P	HOME W	D	L	F	A	AWAY W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
▶	1 Plymouth	39	17	1	1	38	13	8	7	5	32	29	28	83
▶	2 Ipswich	39	13	6	1	46	12	10	6	3	32	19	47	81
▶	3 Sheffield Wed	40	13	6	1	43	15	10	6	4	25	17	36	81
▶	4 Barnsley	39	14	1	4	41	18	9	5	6	26	18	31	75
▶	5 Bolton	39	12	4	3	28	11	7	6	7	25	20	22	67
▶	6 Peterborough	40	12	3	5	35	21	9	1	10	33	26	21	67
▶	7 Derby	40	12	4	4	37	18	7	6	7	24	23	20	67
▶	8 Wycombe	40	10	5	5	30	19	8	3	9	23	23	11	62
▶	9 Portsmouth	40	8	9	3	31	20	8	5	7	24	25	10	62
▶	10 Shrewsbury	39	10	2	7	28	25	6	5	9	19	25	-3	55
▶	11 Exeter City	40	9	5	6	32	22	5	6	9	26	30	6	53
▶	12 Charlton	40	7	7	6	36	24	6	6	8	23	27	8	52
▶	13 Fleetwood Town	40	6	7	7	21	21	6	7	7	23	22	1	50
▶	14 Lincoln City	39	5	13	1	18	14	6	6	9	19	27	-4	49
▶	15 Bristol Rovers	38	6	6	8	23	30	7	3	8	28	30	-9	48
▶	16 Cheltenham	40	7	6	7	19	23	5	3	12	15	28	-17	45
▶	17 Port Vale	40	7	4	9	20	27	5	5	10	20	33	-20	45
▶	18 Burton Albion	38	7	5	7	23	30	5	4	10	26	41	-22	45
▶	19 MK Dons	40	4	5	11	14	26	7	3	10	23	31	-20	41
▶	20 Oxford United	39	5	4	10	23	27	4	8	8	17	23	-10	39
▶	21 Accrington Stanley	39	6	5	9	23	30	3	6	10	10	33	-30	38
▶	22 Cambridge United	39	7	4	9	19	24	3	2	14	13	36	-28	36
▶	23 Morecambe	41	6	8	7	26	29	1	5	14	12	42	-33	34
▶	24 Forest Green Rovers	40	5	1	14	14	34	1	7	12	15	40	-45	26

Sky Bet League Two

		P	HOME W	D	L	F	A	AWAY W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
▶	1 Leyton Orient	39	14	5	1	28	8	9	6	4	24	17	27	80
▶	2 Northampton	40	10	6	4	25	16	9	7	4	28	21	16	70
▶	3 Carlisle	40	11	6	3	30	16	8	6	6	30	21	23	69
▲	4 Stevenage	39	14	2	4	35	15	5	10	4	18	21	17	69
▶	5 Stockport County	40	9	8	3	26	15	10	2	8	27	18	20	67
▶	6 Bradford	39	8	8	4	27	19	9	6	4	21	15	14	65
▶	7 Mansfield Town	39	8	7	4	33	26	10	3	7	30	22	15	64
▶	8 Salford City	40	9	5	6	26	21	9	4	7	35	25	15	63
▶	9 Barrow	40	11	3	6	25	17	6	4	10	17	30	-5	58
▶	10 Sutton United	40	11	4	5	24	16	4	8	8	17	26	-1	57
▶	11 Swindon	39	7	5	7	28	22	6	7	7	24	27	3	51
▶	12 Doncaster	40	10	1	9	24	25	5	5	10	16	30	-15	51
▶	13 Walsall	40	8	8	4	24	15	3	9	8	18	25	2	50
▶	14 Tranmere	40	8	6	6	24	19	5	5	10	14	23	-4	50
▶	15 Grimsby Town	39	4	9	6	19	24	8	3	9	23	26	-8	48
▶	16 Crewe	39	8	6	6	25	23	3	9	7	14	24	-8	48
▶	17 Newport County	39	5	6	8	20	23	6	8	6	21	20	-2	47
▶	18 AFC Wimbledon	41	7	6	7	22	21	4	8	9	21	27	-5	47
▶	19 Gillingham	40	10	4	6	17	17	2	7	11	11	25	-14	47
▶	20 Harrogate Town	39	5	8	7	25	29	5	5	10	20	28	-12	40
▶	21 Colchester	40	4	9	7	17	20	5	3	12	18	27	-12	39
▶	22 Crawley Town	40	8	5	7	29	29	1	6	13	14	35	-21	38
▶	23 Hartlepool	40	4	9	7	23	32	4	5	11	24	37	-22	38
▶	24 Rochdale	40	4	4	12	23	32	4	4	12	15	29	-23	32



Game in numbers

Bill Edgar on Manchester United's liking for Spanish opposition, caretakers and how Haaland has outscored every single club recently

Runaway Palace

Crystal Palace became the first league team to score five times on Easter Sunday when they won 5-1 away to Leeds United. They have gained 42.9 per cent of their top-flight points away from home (431 out of 1004), the highest proportion among the 65 clubs to have played in the top division since 1888 (yesterday they edged ahead of Wigan Athletic).

Roy Hodgson's past four games as a manager have produced 2-1 and 5-1 defeats to conclude his reign at Watford and then 2-1 and 5-1 wins against former Watford managers to start his Palace stint: Leicester City's Brendan Rodgers and Leeds United's Javi Gracia. Hodgson is the first Premier League manager for more than eight years whose team won their first two games of his spell by coming from behind.

Sweet sixteen

Manchester United, who defeated Everton at Old Trafford, are the first top-flight team to win 16 home games in the space of only 109 days, beating Liverpool's 16 in 110 days in 1982-83. Since the turn of the century Everton have played 104 away games against United, Liverpool, Arsenal and Chelsea — and won only three times. After their forthcoming Europa League quarter-final United will have played seven consecutive European games against Spanish teams (one against Real Sociedad, then two each against Barcelona, Real Betis and Sevilla), the longest run by an English club against clubs from the same country, beating Leeds' six in a row against Scottish teams in 1967-68.

Salah framed

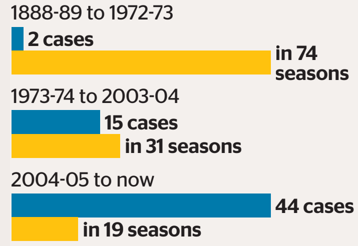
It seemed Arsenal would extend their winning league run to eight games and their lead at the top of the table to eight points with eight matches of the season left when Gabriel Martinelli scored in the eighth minute yesterday, but they were denied victory by eighth-place

POINTS OF HISTORY

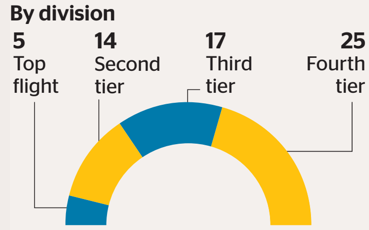
Reading suffered the 61st points deduction in league history last week when they were docked six points for not sticking to a business plan agreed after a previous profit and sustainability rule breach. Reading and EFL Championship rivals Wigan Athletic — who had three points taken away over unpaid wages last month — are in danger of joining the ten teams whose points deductions caused them to be relegated (including Wigan themselves from the same division three seasons ago). Points deductions for entering administration became automatic in 2004, hence the recent rise in cases of docked points

Cases of points deductions

By era



By division



Reason

- Administration **26** (entering it or offences while in it)
- Ineligible player **18**
- Broke financial rules **8**
- Unfulfilled fixture **2**
- Unfulfilled fixture and unpaid wages **2**
- Unpaid wages **2**
- Player misbehaviour **2** (Arsenal 2pts, Man Utd 1pt, top flight, after their match in Oct 1990)
- Crowd misbehaviour **1** (Brighton 2pts, fourth tier, pitch invasion in protest against owners, Oct 1996)

Results

Barclays Premier League

Aston Villa (0) **2** **Nottm Forest** (0) **0**
Traoré 48, Watkins 90+5
42,076

Brentford (1) **1** **Newcastle** (0) **2**
Toney 45+1 (pen)
Raya (og) 54, Isak 61
17,107

Fulham (0) **0** **West Ham** (1) **1**
Reed (og) 23
24,491

Leeds (1) **1** **C Palace** (1) **5**
Bamford 21
Guéhi 45+1, Ayew 53, 77, Eze 55, Édouard 69
36,427

Leicester (0) **0** **Bournemouth** (1) **1**
Billing 40
32,094

Liverpool (1) **2** **Arsenal** (2) **2**
Salah 42, Firmino 87
Martinelli 8, Jesus 28

Man United (1) **2** **Everton** (0) **0**
McTominay 36, Martial 71
73,509

Southampton (0) **1** **Man City** (1) **4**
Mara 72
Haaland 45, 68, Grealish 58, Álvarez 75 (pen)
30,963

Tottenham (1) **2** **Brighton** (1) **1**
Son 10, Kane 79
Dunk 34
61,405

Wolves (1) **1** **Chelsea** (0) **0**
Nunes 31
31,614

Sky Bet Championship

Blackburn (0) **0** **Norwich** (1) **2**
Gibbs 11, Gomes Sara 55
18,544

Blackpool (0) **1** **Cardiff** (3) **3**
Bowler 74
Wickham 21, Kaba 37, Ralls 40
13,462

Midd'brough (0) **1** **Burnley** (1) **2**
Akpom 48 (pen)
Barnes 12, Roberts 66
30,844

Millwall (0) **0** **Luton** (0) **0**
18,422

QPR (0) **0** **Preston** (0) **2**
Cannon 59, 63
14,620

Reading (1) **1** **Birmingham** (1) **1**
Carroll 7
Jutkiewicz 29
16,084

Rotherham (1) **3** **West Brom** (1) **1**
Hugill 42, 50, Fosu-Henry 76
Swift 32 (pen)
11,098

Sheffield Utd (1) **1** **Wigan** (0) **0**
Ndiaye 8
29,026

Stoke (1) **1** **Bristol City** (0) **2**
Powell 36
Vyner 72, Mehmeti 85
22,826

Sunderland (2) **4** **Hull** (2) **4**
Gelhardt 21, Diallo 22, 73 (pen), Clarke 81
Tufan 11, 90+8 (pen), Sayyadmanesh 25, Slater 66

Swansea (0) **0** **Coventry** (0) **0**
19,960

Watford (1) **2** **Huddersfield** (1) **3**
Asprilla 32, Assombalonga 90+2
Rudoni 44, Pearson 55, Harratt 82
19,511
Sent off: Bachmann (Watford) 90+7

League One

Accrington (2) **3** **Port Vale** (0) **0**
Stevens (og) 31, Rodgers 40, Pressley 68 (pen)
3,444
Sent off: Ojo (Port Vale) 90+3

Bristol Rovers (0) **1** **Charlton** (0) **0**
Marquis 71 (pen)
9,613

Burton Albion (0) **2** **Barnsley** (0) **1**
Shaughnessy 50, Taylor 87
Cadden 89
4,333

Cambridge (1) **2** **Fleetwood** (0) **1**
Lankester 3, Smith 57 (pen)
Quitirna 82
6,279

Exeter (0) **0** **Bolton** (1) **1**
Bradley 27
7,530

Forest Green (0) **0** **Derby** (1) **2**
Collins 2 (pen), McGoldrick 82

Ipswich (2) **4** **Wycombe** (0) **0**
Hirst 38, Chaplin 45, Burns 57, Ladapo 76 (pen)
28,511

Lincoln City (1) **2** **Cheltenham** (0) **0**
House 42, 79
8,178

MK Dons (0) **1** **Portsmouth** (1) **1**
Eisa 65
Ogilvie 14
11,395
Sent off: Morrell (Portsmouth) 39

Morecambe (1) **1** **Plymouth** (0) **3**
Weir 3
Mayor 63, Waine 86, Matete 90+3
4,904

Oxford Utd (0) **1** **Sheff Wed** (1) **1**
Brannagan 70 (pen)
Bannan 35
10,238

Shrewsbury (0) **0** **Peterborough** (1) **3**
Clarke-Harris 30 (pen), Mason-Clark 51, Taylor 83
6,930

League Two

Carlisle (2) **2** **Tranmere** (0) **0**
Dennis 3, 39
13,410

Crawley Town (0) **0** **Bradford** (0) **0**
3,644
Sent off: Platt (Bradford) 89

Crewe (2) **3** **Barrow** (0) **0**
Agyei 14 (pen), 33 (pen), Long 89
4,831

Gillingham (1) **1** **Doncaster** (0) **0**
Nichols 44
6,842

Grimsby (0) **1** **Hartlepool** (1) **4**
Efete 54
Kemp 19, 68 (pen), 72, Umerah 76
7,425

Harrogate (0) **2** **Wimbledon** (1) **2**
Armstrong 89, Sutton 90+8
Chislett 32, 57
2,891

Newport (1) **3** **Northampton** (0) **0**
Bogle 43, 90+1 (pen), McNeill 90+6
4,982



Haaland's double took him to 30 league goals for the season

Points loss changed outcome*

- Caused relegation **10** (Middlesbrough, top flight, 1996-97; Wrexham, third tier, 2004-05; Bournemouth, third tier, 2007-08; Luton, fourth tier, 2008-09; Plymouth, third tier, 2010-11; Portsmouth, second tier, 2011-12; Wigan, second tier, 2019-20; Macclesfield, fourth tier, 2019-20; Sheff Wed, second tier, 2020-21; Derby, second tier, 2021-22)
- Denied play-offs **3**
- Denied automatic promotion **1** (Leeds, 15pts, third tier, broke rules relating to exiting administration, 2007-08)
- Caused re-election bid **1** (Blackpool, 2pts, fourth tier, fielding ineligible player, 1982-83; they were indeed re-elected)

*Tallies in this section are slightly lower because of four cases of repeat points deductions for individual clubs in same season

Points loss did not change outcome

- Relegated **9****
- Outside promotion/play-offs and relegation places **28*****
- Play-offs **1** (Torquay, 1pt, fourth tier, fielded ineligible player, 2010-11)
- Promoted **1** (Chesterfield, 9pts, fourth tier, broke financial rules, 2000-01)
- Won title **1** (Arsenal, 2pts, top flight, player misbehaviour, 1990-91)

Clubs

Cases of points deductions (and total points deducted)

4 Rotherham (40pts)

3 Luton (40pts), Portsmouth (29pts), Macclesfield (17pts)

2 Bournemouth (27pts), Leeds (25pts), Derby (21pts), Coventry (20pts), Wigan (15pts), Boston (14pts), Reading (12pts), Stockport (12pts), Crystal Palace (11pts), Bury (4pts)

1 Bolton (12pts), Cambridge (10pts), Darlington (10pts), Plymouth (10pts), Port Vale (10pts), Southampton (10pts), Wrexham (10pts), Birmingham (9pts), Chesterfield (9pts), Sheff Wed (6pts), Hartlepool (3pts), Hereford (3pts), Leyton Orient (3pts), Middlesbrough (2pts), AFC Wimbledon (3pts), Arsenal (2pts), Blackpool (2pts), Brighton (2pts), Bristol Rovers (2pts), Mansfield (2pts), Sunderland (2pts), Tranmere (2pts), Aldershot (1pt), Halifax (1pt), Man Utd (1pt), Newport (1pt), Preston (1pt), Torquay (1pt)

**Wigan on course to join this category this season
***Reading on course to join this category this season



The brawl with United in October 1990 cost Arsenal two points but not the title

Biggest single points deduction

Luton
Fourth tier, 2008-09 **20pts**
(broke rules relating to exiting administration)

Most deductions in a division in one season 2008-09, fourth tier

Luton **30pts**
(see elsewhere)

Bournemouth **17pts**
(failing to exit administration)

Rotherham **17pts**
(failing to exit administration)

Darlington **10pts**
(entering administration)



Brighton pitch invading in protest against their owners in October 1996

Biggest season deduction

Luton
Fourth tier, 2008-09 **30pts**
(broke rules relating to exiting administration)

Top-flight deductions

Sunderland, 1890-91 **2pts**
(fielding ineligible player)

Arsenal, 1990-91 **2pts**
(players fighting in their meeting at Old Trafford)

Middlesbrough, 1996-97 **3pts**
(failing to play fixture v Blackburn)

Portsmouth, 2009-10 **9pts**
(entering administration)



Stellini was shown a red card to set a Premier League Easter weekend record

Liverpool. Mohamed Salah shot outside the frame of the goal from a penalty for the second time in four league appearances for Liverpool (he also fired wide against Bournemouth), the fastest such double within a season in the Premier League era — the previous quickest was two in ten appearances by Norwich City full back Mark Bowen in 1992.

Perfect ten

Erling Haaland has scored ten times for Manchester City in his past 173 minutes on the pitch (spread across three games) — none of the 92 league teams as a whole (including City) have scored as many as ten goals in their past 173 minutes of action. City, who beat Southampton 4-1, have scored four or more goals in a match 19 times since Chelsea last did so. City are the first top-flight team for 13 years to hit at least four goals in four consecutive games in all competitions.

Caring and sharing

This season Steve Davis has lost to Chelsea in his first game as Wolverhampton Wanderers caretaker manager and Frank Lampard has lost to Wolves in his first game as Chelsea caretaker manager. Chelsea are the first club to employ two managers in one season who also managed a rival Premier League club in that campaign (Lampard also led Everton; Graham Potter guided Brighton & Hove Albion).

Triple trouble

Brentford, beaten by Newcastle United, are the first team to have scored an own goal, failed with a penalty and had a goal ruled out by VAR in the same Premier League match. Cristian Stellini, the Tottenham Hotspur caretaker manager, became the first Cristian/Christian (player or manager) to be sent off during Easter weekend in the Premier League era.

In good Kompany

In terms of points per game, and assuming three points for a win, Burnley are on course to produce the best second-tier season by a newly relegated team since Nottingham Forest in 1906-07. And history has repeated as the former league title-winning centre back guides his team to promotion to the top flight with seven games to spare in his first season as a manager in English football: Vincent Kompany (Burnley this season) has emulated Jack Charlton (Middlesbrough in 1973-74).

Fixtures

Rochdale (2) **4** — **Walsall** (1) **2**
Henderson 42, Lloyd-McGoldrick 44, Taylor 56, Brierley 65 — Matt 23, Knowles 51
3,090

Salford City (0) **0** — **Leyton O** (2) **2**
3,412 — Sotiriou 22, Moncur 35

Stevenage (0) **1** — **Colchester** (1) **1**
Gilbey 47 — Hall 18
4,763

Sutton Utd (0) **0** — **Stockport** (0) **1**
4,258 — Stretton 53

Swindon (1) **2** — **Mansfield** (3) **4**
Hepburn-Murphy 3, Williams 86 — Quinn 13, Akins 32, Oates 33, Boateng 65
9,281

National League
Aldershot Town 1 Yeovil Town 1; Barnet 1 Bromley 1; Boreham Wood 0 Dagenham and Redbridge 1; Chesterfield 1 York City 3; Dorking Wanderers 1 Woking 2; FC Halifax Town 3 Wrexham 1; Gateshead 2 Scunthorpe United 0; Notts County 3 Wealdstone 0; Oldham Athletic 2 Altrincham 2; Solihull Moors 1 Maidenhead United 1; Southend United 2 Maidstone United 0; Torquay United 2 Eastleigh 0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Notts County	42	30	10	2	106	36	70	100
Wrexham	41	31	7	3	106	39	67	100
Woking	41	22	9	10	67	42	25	75
Chesterfield	41	21	9	11	68	47	21	72
Barnet	41	20	8	13	73	64	9	68
Boreham Wood	41	17	14	10	48	34	14	65
Eastleigh	41	19	7	15	48	45	3	64
Bromley	41	16	14	11	60	50	10	62
Southend	41	17	8	16	49	40	9	59
Dag & Red	41	17	7	17	57	67	-10	58
Solihull Moors	41	15	11	15	60	59	1	56
Wealdstone	41	15	11	15	51	66	-15	56
Altrincham	41	14	11	16	61	73	-12	53
York	42	13	10	19	50	54	-4	49
FC Halifax	40	13	10	17	40	46	-6	49
Maidenhead	42	13	10	19	45	57	-12	49
Oldham	41	12	12	17	54	63	-9	48
*Gateshead	39	11	14	14	54	55	-1	46
Dorking W	41	13	7	21	59	86	-27	46
Aldershot	41	12	8	21	55	69	-14	44
Torquay	41	10	10	21	48	69	-21	40
Yeovil	41	7	18	16	33	50	-17	39
Scunthorpe	42	8	10	24	46	78	-32	34
Maidstone	42	5	9	28	43	92	-49	24

*deducted 1pt for fielding an ineligible player

National League North
Blyth Spartans 0 Darlington 0; Boston United 4 Farsley Celtic 0; Brackley 1 AFC Telford United 2; Bradford (P A) 2 Southport 0; Chester FC 0 Chorley 0; Gloucester City 1 Banbury United 1; Kidderminster Harriers 1 Buxton 0; King's Lynn T 4 Kettering Town 1; Leamington 2 Hereford FC 0; Peterborough Sports 1 Alfreton 2; Scarborough Athletic 0 Curzon Ashton 1; Spennymoor 2 AFC Fylde 1

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
AFC Fylde	41	25	8	8	70	41	29	83
King's Lynn	42	23	12	7	74	40	34	81
Chester FC	42	19	17	6	63	38	25	74
Brackley Town	42	17	13	12	50	41	9	64
Darlington	41	17	12	12	68	54	14	63
Alfreton Town	40	16	15	9	50	36	14	63
Scarborough A	42	17	12	13	67	62	5	63
Gloucester City	42	17	10	15	65	62	3	61
Chorley	42	15	15	12	54	42	12	60
Buxton	42	15	13	14	50	49	1	58
Curzon Ashton	40	16	9	15	51	47	4	57
Kiddrmnstr	42	15	12	15	38	41	-3	57
Peterborough S	42	15	11	16	50	51	-1	56
Spennymoor T	41	14	14	13	58	62	-4	56
Boston United	42	14	10	18	62	61	1	52
Banbury United	41	13	12	16	51	56	-5	51
Southport	41	13	11	17	44	49	-5	50
Hereford FC	42	14	8	20	43	49	-6	50
Kettering Town	42	10	16	16	36	55	-19	46
Farsley Celtic	42	11	13	18	46	68	-22	46
Leamington	42	9	18	15	37	49	-12	45
Blyth Spartans	42	10	13	19	40	59	-19	43
Bradford (P A)	41	9	11	21	37	61	-24	38
AFC Telford	42	6	13	23	33	64	-31	31

National League South
Bath City 0 Taunton 2; Chelmsford City 3 Farnborough 2; Dover 0 Welling 0; Dulwich Hamlet 1 Cheshunt 0; Eastbourne Borough 2 Dartford 1; Ebbsfleet 3 Oxford City 0; Hampton & Richmond 2 Hungerford 0; Havant & Waterlooville 2 Weymouth 2; Slough 6 Chippenham 1; St Albans City 0 Braintree Town 2; Tonbridge Angels 1 Hemel Hempstead 1; Worthing 7 Concord Rangers 0

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Ebbsfleet United	42	30	7	5	98	41	57	97
Dartford	40	22	7	11	75	44	31	73
Oxford City	42	19	14	9	73	51	22	71
Chelmsford City	41	21	8	12	58	42	16	71
Braintree	42	18	13	11	59	50	9	67
St Albans City	42	19	9	14	64	48	16	66
Worthing	41	18	12	11	82	67	15	66
Eastbourne B	42	20	5	17	69	62	7	65
Hav & Wat	41	18	9	14	73	61	12	63
Farnborough	41	18	9	14	55	45	10	63
Tonbridge A	42	18	9	15	63	65	-2	63
Bath City	41	16	10	15	55	52	3	58
Hemel Hemp	42	15	13	14	47	50	-3	58
Chippenham	42	13	15	14	51	62	-11	54
Hampt & Rich	41	14	8	19	56	63	-7	50
Taunton Town	39	13	10	16	41	43	-2	49
Dover Athletic	41	12	12	17	40	55	-15	48
Slough Town	42	12	11	19	54	73	-19	47
Welling	41	11	14	16	47	58	-11	46
Dulwich Hamlet	41	12	6	23	57	86	-29	42
Cheshunt	41	10	10	21	45	65	-20	40
Weymouth	41	10	6	25	50	75	-25	36
Hungerford T	39	9	8	22	41	57	-16	35
Concord R	37	8	7	22	33	71	-38	31

Cinch Scottish Premiership

Aberdeen (1) **2** — **Kilmarnock** (0) **0**
de Barros Lopes 1, 59 — 16,248

Celtic (1) **3** — **Rangers** (1) **2**
Furuhashi 26, 62, Jota 73 — Tavernier 45, 78

Dundee Utd (1) **2** — **Hibernian** (0) **1**
Fletcher 8, McGrath 90 (pen) — Kukharevych 70

Hearts (0) **0** — **St Mirren** (0) **2**
18,660 — Main 52, Gogic 57
Sent off: Snodgrass (Hearts) 62

Motherwell (3) **3** — **Livingston** (0) **0**
Van Veen 9, 33, Johnston 34 — 4,566

St Johnstone (0) **0** — **Ross County** (1) **2**
Murray 45, Cancola 49

	P	W	D	L	F	A	GD	Pts
Celtic	31	29	1	1	98	23	75	88
Rangers	31	24	4	3	76	30	46	76
Aberdeen	31	15	2	14	49	52	-3	47
Hearts	31	13	6	12	50	47	3	45
St Mirren	31	12	8	11	36	42	-6	44
Hibernian	31	12	4	15	47	51	-4	40
Livingston	31	11	6	14	31	50	-19	39
Motherwell	31	10	6	15	42	45	-3	36
St Johnstone	31	9	5	17	33	51	-18	32
Kilmarnock	31	7	7	17	26	54	-28	28
Ross County	31	7	6	18	27	45	-18	27
Dundee United	31	6	7	18	32	57	-25	25

Scottish Championship: Arbroath 0 Dundee 0; Ayr United 1 Morton 1; Hamilton Academical 1 Cove Rangers 1; Inverness Caledonian Thistle 2 Raith Rovers 0.
League One Airdrieonians 3 Montrose 0; Alloa Athletic 1 Queen of the South 2; Falkirk 2 Dunfermline Athletic 2; Kelty Hearts 0 Clyde 0; Peterhead 1 FC Edinburgh 0.
Scottish League Two Albion 3 Elgin City 0; Annan 3 Dumbarton 1; Stenhousemuir 0 Bonnyrigg Rose 0; Stirling 2 East Fife 2; Stranraer 0 Forfar 0.

Kick-off 3.0 unless stated

Today

Sky Bet Championship Birmingham v Stoke; Bristol City v Middlesbrough (5.30); Burnley v Sheffield Utd (8.0); Cardiff v Sunderland; Coventry v Watford; Huddersfield v Blackburn (12.30); Hull v Millwall; Luton v Blackpool; Norwich v Rotherham; Preston v Reading; West Bromwich v QPR; Wigan v Swansea.
League One Barnsley v Shrewsbury; Bolton v Cambridge Utd; Charlton v Burton Albion; Cheltenham v Ipswich; Derby v Milton Keynes Dons; Fleetwood Town v Bristol Rovers; Peterborough v Exeter; Plymouth v Lincoln City; Port Vale v Oxford Utd; Portsmouth v Morecambe; Sheffield Wednesday v Accrington Stanley; Wycombe v Forest Green. **League Two** AFC Wimbledon v Salford City; Barrow v Crawley Town; Bradford v Sutton Utd; Colchester v Crewe; Doncaster v Grimsby; Hartlepool v Stevenage; Leyton Orient v Harrogate Town; Mansfield v Rochdale; Northampton v Gillingham; Stockport County v Newport County; Tranmere v Swindon; Walsall v Carlisle.
Vanarama National League Altrincham v Gateshead; Bromley v Boreham Wood; Dagenham & Redbridge v Chesterfield; Eastleigh v Aldershot; Maidenhead Utd v Torquay; Maidstone Utd v Barnet; Scunthorpe v Oldham; Wealdstone v Solihull Moors; Woking v Southend; Wrexham v Notts County; Yeovil v Dorking Wanderers; York v Halifax.
National League South Braintree Town v Ebbsfleet United; Cheshunt v Worthing; Chippenham Town v Hampton & Richmond; Concord Rangers v St Albans City; Dartford v Dover Athletic; Farnborough v Tonbridge Angels; Hemel Hempstead Town v Dulwich Hamlet; Hungerford Town v Havant & Waterlooville; Oxford City v Chelmsford City; Taunton Town v Slough Town; Welling United v Eastbourne Borough; Weymouth v Bath City.
National League North AFC Fylde v Kidderminster Harriers; AFC Telford United v Gloucester City; Alfreton Town v Kings Lynn Town; Banbury United v Peterborough Sports; Buxton v Boston United; Chorley v Scarborough Athletic; Curzon Ashton v Spennymoor Town; Darlington v Bradford (Park Avenue); Farsley Celtic v Blyth Spartans; Hereford FC v Brackley Town; Kettering Town v Leamington; Southport v Chester FC.

Kick-off 7.45 unless stated

Tomorrow

Champions League: Quarter-finals, first leg (8.0): Benfica v Inter Milan; Manchester City v Bayern Munich.
Cinch Championship Dundee v Raith; Inverness CT v Arbroath; Morton v Hamilton. **League One** Montrose v Falkirk; Peterhead v Dunfermline. **League Two** Dumbarton v Stirling Albion; Elgin v Stenhousemuir.
Women's internationals England v Australia (at Brentford Community Stadium); Portugal v Wales (5.30); Scotland v Costa Rica (7.35).

Wednesday

Champions League: Quarter-finals, first leg (8.0): AC Milan v Napoli; Real Madrid v Chelsea.
Vanarama National League Eastleigh v Gateshead.

Thursday

Europa League: Quarter-finals, first leg Bayer Leverkusen v Union Saint Gilloise (8.0); Feyenoord v Roma (5.45); Juventus v Sporting (8.0); Manchester Utd v Sevilla (8.0).
Europa Conference League: Quarter-finals, first leg Anderlecht v AZ Alkmaar (8.0); Basel v Nice (8.0); Gent v West Ham (5.45); Lech Poznan v Fiorentina (8.0).

Friday

Sky Bet Championship Middlesbrough v Norwich (8.0).
Cinch Premiership Ross County v Aberdeen.
Cinch Championship Queen's Park v Hamilton.

Kick-off 3.0 unless stated

Saturday

Premier League Aston Villa v Newcastle (12.30); Chelsea v Brighton; Everton v Fulham; Manchester City v Leicester (5.30); Southampton v Crystal Palace; Tottenham v Bournemouth; Wolverhampton v Brentford.
Sky Bet Championship Blackburn v Hull (7.45); Blackpool v Wigan; Millwall v Preston; QPR v Coventry; Reading v Burnley; Rotherham v Luton; Sheffield Utd v Cardiff (12.30); Stoke v West Bromwich; Sunderland v Birmingham; Swansea v Huddersfield; Watford v Bristol City.
League One Accrington Stanley v Fleetwood Town; Bristol Rovers v Derby; Burton Albion v Sheffield Wednesday; Cambridge Utd v Peterborough (12.30); Exeter v Plymouth (midday); Forest Green v Barnsley; Ipswich v Charlton; Lincoln City v Port Vale; Milton Keynes Dons v Cheltenham; Morecambe v Wycombe; Oxford Utd v Bolton; Shrewsbury v Portsmouth. **League Two** Carlisle v Northampton; Crawley Town v Tranmere; Crewe v Walsall; Gillingham v Stockport County; Grimsby v Mansfield; Harrogate Town v Doncaster; Newport County v Hartlepool; Rochdale v Bradford City; Salford v Colchester; Stevenage v AFC Wimbledon; Sutton Utd v Leyton Orient; Swindon v Barrow.
Vanarama National League Aldershot v Scunthorpe; Barnet v Wrexham; Boreham Wood v Wealdstone; Chesterfield v Eastleigh; Dorking Wanderers v Altrincham; Gateshead v Bromley; Halifax v Maidstone Utd; Notts County v Woking; Oldham v Maidenhead Utd; Solihull Moors v Yeovil; Southend v Dagenham & Redbridge; Torquay v York.
Cinch Premiership Hibernian v Hearts (12.30); Livingston v St Johnstone; Motherwell v Dundee Utd; Rangers v St Mirren.
Cinch Championship Cove Rangers v Inverness CT; Dundee v Morton; Partick v Ayr; Raith v Arbroath. **League One** Clyde v FC Edinburgh; Dunfermline v Queen of South; Falkirk v Airdrieonians; Kelty Hearts v Alloa; Montrose v Peterhead. **League Two** Annan v Albion; Bonnyrigg Rose v Dumbarton; East Fife v Stranraer; Elgin v Forfar; Stenhousemuir v Stirling Albion.

Sunday

Premier League Nottingham Forest v Manchester Utd (4.30); West Ham United v Arsenal (2.0).
Cinch Premiership Kilmarnock v Celtic (midday).
Women's FA Cup: Semi-final Aston Villa v Chelsea (2.15).

IAN HAWKEY





European Football

Plenty to spook Lampard - but not phantom footballer of Bernabéu

Adult supporters of Chelsea will remember the goal vividly. Elegantly constructed, it established a famous landmark and helped build a legend they hear cited again and again. As it happens, the three players who made that goal have a chance to recall it, face to face if they wish, on Wednesday. Ashley Cole could retell how deftly his pass set up the cross. Frank Lampard could talk to the crosser about how skilfully he anticipated a trademark surge from midfield for the finish.

The crosser that May 2013 afternoon at Aston Villa, direct provider of Lampard's 203rd, club-record Chelsea goal? It was Eden Hazard. And a fine accomplice he was for two seasons for Lampard's late-career accumulation of honours. Hazard's assists, and the penalties awarded to him and entrusted to Lampard to convert, helped burnish the legend of Lampard the Chelsea idol. Perhaps an older Hazard might have put more gleam on the Lampard coaching record, too. When Lampard first became Chelsea head coach, in 2019, a principal inconvenience was adjusting the squad to life after Eden.

Now that Lampard is legend-turned-locum-manager, setting off with Cole at his shoulder for a Champions League quarter-final away to Real Madrid, he might wonder again at that fork in their roads. At the Bernabéu, Hazard will be sitting nearby, unlikely to find his way off the Madrid bench but careful, for historical reasons, not to exchange too many smiles or wistful recollections with old Chelsea allies.

He'll be being watched, because Madrid-Chelsea fixtures in the Champions League now act as an annual stocktake of his declining relevance. Twelve months ago, Hazard sat out, injured, the see-saw Madrid victory over Chelsea; he played no part in any of Madrid's epic knockout comebacks or the victorious European Cup final, but at least last season he participated, mostly as a substitute, in nearly half of the Liga matches, leaving some light fingerprints on one part of a double. This season, there is no masking how marginal Hazard has become: a mere 25 minutes of league action since September and only a brief period when injury put him out of starting XI contention.

Two years ago, when Chelsea met Madrid in the Champions League semi-finals, Hazard did play, a starter in the 2-0 loss at Stamford Bridge, and in the fallout, he heard shrill criticism from across the Spanish media for sharing grins and jokes with former colleagues after the whistle. To look back on the incident is to see a watershed moment in the sad saga of Madrid's Phantom Footballer. It was when many madridistas turned against a player whose first 18 months, after his much-trailed move from London, had been regarded with a degree of sympathy for being so punctuated by injuries. With the bonhomie at the Bridge, caught on camera, he was easily cast as an overpaid dilettante who cares too little.

It can be tough, at Madrid, to recover from opprobrium like that, although Luka Modric — caricatured as the club's "worst signing" during the first of the 10 seasons of his epochal career there — did, and in style. It also needs a thick skin to bear the drip-drip of reminders, ever more explicit, that the club would like you off the top of their wage bill, as Gareth Bale, who used to spend a good deal of time sitting among the substitutes with Hazard, would bear witness. But Bale, in his later, unloved years had far more accumulated credit to lean on than Hazard has. The Welshman had enjoyed a long, earlier period of excellence in Madrid's colours; Hazard's past excellence belongs almost exclusively to Chelsea and to Lille, not to the club who paid close to £100 million for him and who have so far seen him start barely one match in five in La Liga, score just four league goals in nearly four seasons and never play so much as a minute in the fixture every footballer joins Madrid to take part in. Here's the really crushing summary of Hazard at Madrid: In his time there, they have played 12 clásicos against Barcelona. He has never been closer to one than a warm-up jog, in a substitute's bib, along the touchline.

The strong likelihood is he never will be. His contract, paying him the squad's highest salary since Bale departed, runs to 2024. Bar a radical volte-face in head coach Carlo Ancelotti's view of Hazard — or the appointment of an devout Hazard-enthusiast as head coach if, as is plausible, Ancelotti is replaced this summer — he will be ushered very firmly towards an exit, any exit, this June.*

Hazard's experience over the past four months must counsel him, at 32, to reboot his career somewhere else. In November, after a dispiriting World Cup with Belgium, he retired from internationals, the better, he said, to finally kick-start his Madrid career. "When he returned from the World Cup, he trained really well," recalled Thibaut Courtois, his compatriot and club colleague, "and he was hoping for a chance because our Brazilians came back later. The opportunity didn't come. His head dropped a bit."

Those Brazilians? The undroppable Vinícius Junior and the waspish Rodrygo, first and second picks as often as not to flank Karim Benzema in Madrid's forward line. Ancelotti has made it clear where they rank relative to Hazard, even if, as Hazard has acknowledged, he and the Italian speak seldom one-to-one. "I've not hidden the fact that in his position we have Vinícius," explained Ancelotti, "and he's a player who gives us so much." He scarcely needed to add that Federico Valverde, pushed up from midfield to auxiliary winger, and Marco Asensio stand far higher in the Ancelotti hierarchy than Hazard.

He hardly needed to spell out that, even if Ancelotti suspects his own future may be defined by what happens against Chelsea, one of the last men he expects to come to the rescue if Madrid falter would be his former Chelsea superstar — the player pursued so ardently, for so long and so expensively, but for so little in return.

AGENCIA LOF/ACTION PLUS/SHUTTERSTOCK



Hazard was a hero at Stamford Bridge, synonymous with a period of unprecedented success for the club, below. At Madrid he has been cast as an overpaid dilettante who cares too little about them



FUNNY OLD GAME

Comedian George Lewis reflects on the week's action



In what is looking like the greatest comeback since B*Witched reformed to play the Swindon County Ground in 2013, Frank Lampard has begun his second spell as Chelsea manager.

If you'd have tried telling me a year ago that this would happen, I'd have smiled politely so as not to agitate you, then sprinted away through fear for my own personal safety.

But this is football, where crazy things happen. And it actually only seems crazy because it doesn't often happen in football. Usually when a club — especially one of the top ones — gets rid of a manager, they blame them for all of their woes and they are never seen again. In rare instances they are brought back years later to steady the ship in a relegation battle, but Chelsea aren't quite there yet.

Lampard's return raised a few eyebrows among the Chelsea faithful. They were raised further during the underwhelming loss to Wolves. If you work with a Chelsea fan, you'll notice their forehead has a few more wrinkles this week.

But even though it wasn't the Easter resurrection some had prayed for, there is logic to Frank's return. For a start, there are no high expectations. Everyone remembers his first tenure, so the bar is nice and low. Each little bit of success will be a pleasant surprise.

Another thing is that Chelsea fans (and most others in football for that matter) like Lampard and it's nice to see one of the good guys get a second bite of the cherry. But this would imply that Todd Boehly's motivations are big-hearted, when they come from his big, pragmatic head.

Chelsea have paid out a lot of money signing players and £20 million to get Potter from Brighton in the first place. So, the books need some balancing and this is where Frank can shine.

You might have seen the leaked list doing the rounds that shows the club fines he imposed in his last spell as manager. They feature things like "late for team meetings — £500 per minute" and being late for training would cost you a whopping £20,000. This means that one carefully deployed tractor on the road to the Chelsea training ground could raise enough money to pay for Mykhailo Mudryk. Chelsea will be financially sound again before we know it.

But don't write off success just yet. There's still an outside chance they could win the Champions League. Lampard only needs to win three rounds and he'll go down in history as one of the greats. They will probably get rid of him in the summer anyway, as is the Chelsea way. But I suspect Frank will think, in the words of B*Witched, *c'est la vie.*

TIMES2



Raise your glasses: it's the big bank holiday quiz

By Olav Bjortomt

*Question 21:
King Charles began his first state visit in which city?

More royal revelations? Let the Coronation countdown begin . . .

Charlie Gowans-Eglinton





CHRIS JACKSON/AP

You'd be forgiven for thinking that a new tell-all book on the royal family might struggle to find any bombshells that weren't dropped by Prince Harry when he turned the millennial habit of oversharing into *Spare* (stadium tour not yet confirmed).

Yet even those who feign disinterest in gossip can't argue with Harry's book sales, so you can expect water-cooler conversations to centre around Robert Jobson's *Our King: Charles III: The Man and the Monarch Revealed* for the next few weeks. That and *Succession*, but if you join the conversation midway through and aren't sure which it is, commenting "Did you see the size of her handbag?", "I'm glad my family aren't like that" or "How much money do you think they spend on private jets?" will safely work for either.

In a series of excerpts of *Our King* in the Daily Mail, those who worked in Queen Elizabeth II's household are finding working in the King's "very corporate, like a hotel". Do they do weddings? Do the King and Queen have a "do not disturb" sign for the door? Must all eggs be scrambled at least an hour in advance then kept at room temperature?

And if we assume that Queen Elizabeth's household was *not* like a hotel, what exactly was it like? A holiday camp, with weekly singalongs? A boarding school, with points given for sliding down the bannisters while holding a corgi? Apparently King Charles is in no rush to move out of Clarence House, and is considering turning Buckingham into more of a "people's palace". Are we talking rides? Waxworks? Or perhaps Airbnb-ing the place? The producers of *The Crown* might be interested.

According to the excerpts that Oprah interview was a "chilling new low" in the relationship between Harry, his father and his brother, and Queen Elizabeth viewed the Sussexes' behaviour as "quite mad", concluding that Harry was "so consumed" by his love for Meghan that it was affecting his judgment. Queen Elizabeth told Harry to speak to his father, finding his phone calls "quite difficult and wearisome" — although when he did Charles stopped taking his calls because he "wasn't a bank". When Harry had first discussed marriage Charles apparently told him that he couldn't afford to pay for Meghan on top of Camilla and William's family.

In Queen Elizabeth's last hours Charles was "drawing solace and strength from the trees" and foraging for mushrooms, which does sound a little bit woo-woo but may boost sales of Duchy Organic mushrooms at Waitrose, which could bolster the royal coffers. Possibly too late for the Sussexes, though — the book says that discussions about Harry's Duke of Sussex title are being had "at the highest level", and while the King is said to be in favour of him keeping it, other royals are "less indulgent". Shall we have a little guess who?

A "senior royal", meanwhile, shared of the Princess of Wales that when the artists formerly known as the fab four reformed to view tributes to Queen Elizabeth at Windsor Castle in the days after her death, "such was the ill feeling between the two couples, the joint walkabout was one of the hardest things she had ever had to do". You may be thinking that one of the hardest things you ever had to do was, well, harder than small talk. But it depends on the small talk. With the Coronation just around the corner we can but hope that should someone small-talk the princess into a corner, ask the King for a personal loan or moan about the overnight guests' requests for choccies on the pillow and a late checkout, a "senior royal" will be within earshot, writing it all down.

Not just a dating profile

My rent leaps up £200 this month as private rents climb to record highs — but I should count myself lucky that I'm not looking for a flat now. Letting agents where I live in north London have asked applicants to submit biographies and even a photograph of themselves to be in the running. So, um, a dating profile, but with an added credit check?

I've made plenty of dating profiles — although I'm still single so perhaps mine could use some work. The credit check wouldn't be an awful addition on Hinge, actually, since we'll need two salaries to be able to afford a shoebox in London if I do find a partner to buy with. Perhaps, instead of men sending unsolicited pics of their bits, they could send a testimonial from their landlady? I'll show you mine if you show me yours!

When it comes to finding a flat to rent, however, I'd need an overhaul. That hotel room selfie from the Ritz in Paris will have to go, no matter how fantastic my outfit looks, or they'll be asking for more money. And while I'm sure a "hello, boys" pushed-up bikini shot would do just as well at Foxtons as it does on Tinder, it may make things a little awkward on moving day.

Taylor and millennial romances

Time for one more gossip bombshell: the news that the pop Goliath Taylor Swift (stadium tour under way) and her actor boyfriend Joe Alwyn have broken up after six years.

Since some of Swift's biggest hits have been written about her exes we can only hope that the split was amicable.

The odds aren't great. A new study has found that 72 per cent of millennials have ended a relationship by ghosting — no explanations, just disappearing. I was about to deny ever having done so, until I remembered that, aged 11, I ended things with my first boyfriend by just not showing up to the cinema. Let's hope that the threat of one of the biggest musical acts in the world immortalising your break-up would motivate you to behave a bit better.

I moved abroad to survive the cost of living crisis. I'm not the only one

Having spent my twenties struggling to pay the rent, I lost my job just as inflation began to rise. So I took dramatic action. By Jessica Morgan



This time last year I was working nine-hour days in a miserable office in central London, travelling to and from my flat in north London stuck shoulder to shoulder with hundreds of others on the train. And despite my best efforts I was always worried about money.

Now, for the first time in my life, I'm not worried about making each month's rent. I can comfortably afford a gym membership and a top therapist at a good hospital. I can go out to restaurants (even Michelin-starred ones), bars and clubs, and travel at regular intervals.

There's only one catch. In order to make that happen I've had to leave behind my friends and family to move more than 3,000 miles across the world to Abu Dhabi.

Let me explain. Last June I lost my job at a digital publishing company and with it my £50,000 salary and the ability to pay for my rent, bills, food and medication. It felt like the final straw. Since graduating in 2016 I've moved from job to job and, like many millennials, taken a while to find a career path. I started in law, then went into finance and eventually settled in journalism.

My first journalism job earned me £17,000 a year and I had no choice but to live at home with my parents because I couldn't afford London's rent prices. It was a double-edged sword: I had to fork out £5,000 a year on train fares to commute from Essex to London, which meant I could only dream of luxuries like memberships to gyms and socialising with friends.

Over the next few years I worked my way up, moving from job to job in order to get the pay rises and promotions I wanted, bumping up my salary to £50,000 in three years. During the pandemic I was able to save on travel fares and use that money to move into a rented place of my own. However, even on a salary I thought was pretty decent for 28, I still struggled and it broke my heart to see half of my monthly earnings swallowed up by national insurance, tax and student loans. And that was before inflation went through the roof.

By the time I was made redundant, I was terrified of the energy price hikes to come — the weekly rise in my food bill was already bad enough. After applying for more than 50 senior roles on LinkedIn that didn't pay more than £40,000, I realised that I was almost certainly going to have to take even more of a pay cut. Even if I could afford to cover my £1,400 a month

> I don't miss the constant anxiety I felt trying to make ends meet

rent and spiralling bills, this would mean sacrificing important outgoings, such as my weekly therapy sessions and £29 monthly gym membership. I realise that some would consider these a luxury but I felt they were vital for my mental health, having been diagnosed with PTSD and anxiety.

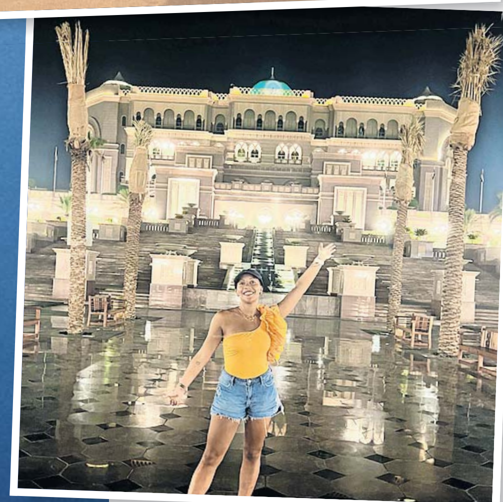
It had dawned on me that it didn't matter if I was earning £20,000 or £60,000, continuing to live in London had become unsustainable. I was still living from pay packet to pay packet, and I often found myself overdrawn by the last week of the month.

I had considered moving to other parts of the UK. Margate looked appealing and so did Manchester. The problem? The jobs I was qualified for did not offer remote or flexible working arrangements.

SARAH CRESSWELL FOR THE TIMES







That's when I decided to say, "F*** it, I'm moving abroad."

In a bit of serendipitous timing, I was headhunted for a job as the editor of a magazine in Abu Dhabi. At the time I was newly unemployed, grieving the sudden death of my aunt and had recently broken up with my boyfriend. Of course I was nervous. It was so far away and a different culture that I knew little about. But if I didn't like it, I reasoned, I could come home.

And so, last August, I queued at Heathrow security for my flight, running back in tears to give my family one last squeeze before embarking on my new life with an almost six-figure (and tax-free!) salary.

In absolute terms the cost of living is far higher here than in the UK. Housing and groceries are expensive, and I have to pay much more for my medication here than I would on the NHS. The difference? I'm paid considerably more and I am no longer waking up in the middle of the night worrying about my finances.

I live in a villa with three others. We have a pool in a gated community that houses families of different nationalities. For the first time I have been able to save money without making sacrifices. Plus I have a dog! Things that felt completely out of my financial reach in London are now a reality.

If moving thousands of miles from home in order to stay financially solvent sounds dramatic, well, I'm not the only one doing it.

A survey last year found that a staggering three million Brits were considering moving overseas for a better quality of life, while 3 per cent of Brits said they were actively planning to relocate in the next two years to escape the cost of living crisis. That would equate to an immediate exodus of 380,000 UK workers.

Take Louise, 22, a British national who moved to Canada in 2021 after feeling it was impossible to enjoy London without being a high earner. The publicist, who works at a big record label, says she doesn't regret her move to Canada and aims for permanent residency and eventually citizenship. "Toronto has managed to hit every single hope I had in moving here: a higher salary, more authentic friendships, a walkable city, new hobbies, transitioning into more of an extrovert and being excited about the present and not just hoping things would be better in the future."

She says she has also experienced a lot of "firsts" in Canada, including enjoying a C$2,000 (about £1,200) a month disposable income to spend on the things she wants, as well as having a six-figure salary within her reach before she turns 30.

The cost of living crisis was also the reason for Melanie, 27, to leave her life in the UK for the French Riviera. "I was in my overdraft every 15th of the month, even though I didn't lead an extravagant life in London," she says. Despite being offered a new role with a higher salary in October last year, which meant she could afford a studio or a small one-bedroom flat in London, she couldn't bring herself to spend upward of £1,200 a month on rent. "After sharing over six houses and flats with friends and strangers, I was emotionally and physically exhausted and I refused to sacrifice my sleep because of yet another party being thrown in the living room on weekdays, and I was sick and tired of cleaning up after other people. Nearing the age of 30, that is not the life I wanted."

Now Melanie lives in a coastal city in the south of France, a mecca for outdoorsy types like her.

"For €800 [about £700] a month, I live by myself in a very nice area, ten minutes from the city centre and ten minutes from the beach. I feel more independent and free to do whatever I want whenever I want. And I associate this freedom with adulthood. I feel in control of my life and I feel a sense of belonging."

Jessica Morgan and, above, in Abu Dhabi. Below: Lewis, who moved from London to Mexico



Lewis, 35, escaped the cost of living crisis by moving from London to the sunny isles of Mexico while working remotely as a web developer. "When I first left the UK I noticed that my corporate salary went noticeably further and for the first time in my life I was able to both save money and lead an enjoyable existence. In London those things are mutually exclusive. In Mexico I was spending about 35 per cent less on rent for a place about four times the size of my London flat, eating out at restaurants every day and every weekend."

I will be honest. There are things I miss about living in the UK; watching *Coronation Street* with my mum, watching Arsenal at the Emirates with my dad and brother, and enjoying picantes with my friends at Soho House. I miss walks on Hampstead Heath, cosy afternoons at my flat on rainy days and heading to my local café for a jacket potato and a cup of tea. There's also the guilt of leaving my friends and ageing family behind.

But I don't miss the constant anxiety I felt trying to make ends meet, in dead end jobs that offered no benefits or pay rises. As it currently stands I don't see myself returning to the UK permanently any time soon. The pandemic gave me a false hope that things would change, and remote working was a huge part of being able to save money.

Now, aged 30, I finally have a healthy work/life balance (and bank balance). It's just a shame I had to move 3,000 miles from home to find it.

The lowdown
The Beckhams

You wouldn't think they'd need to know how.

Who? What?

The Beckham boys. You'd think they'd pursue other avenues — of which they have many — and leave the domestic hobbies to those with more experience.

That's a hot take. Of which domestic hobby do you speak?

Cooking. They can't stop, with mixed results.

Mixed in the way the ingredients were intended to be?

That depends — what do you make of a cork in bolognese?

It's not the kind of fibre I usually look for in my pasta dishes, granted.

Brooklyn Beckham, 24, might disagree. A couple of weeks ago he uploaded a picture of himself to Instagram cooking the dish with said bottle stopper in the pot.

To what end?

Unclear. Perhaps he thought it would add depth of flavour.

Yes. Just perhaps not a particularly nice one.

He's not the only one at it. Imagine barbecuing in a £50,000 tent.

I can't.

Well, that's what Beckham senior gets up to. He recently served up some fish and veggies from one of Guy Ritchie's Cashmere Caveman barbecue tents. The WildKitchen features a large grill and table for 12.

Stick to footie, David!

Now Brooklyn's younger brother has joined in too.

Uh-oh…

The 20-year-old Romeo Beckham and his It-girl girlfriend Mia Regan have interrupted their usual insta-programming to post the results of their first roast dinner attempt together.

Imagine getting to that age and having never cooked a roast.

It didn't look too bad…

Sorry, Beckhams — based on the culinary evidence, I can't say I'd be rushing to try it.

Hannah Rogers



Uh-oh, it's the big Easter quiz

From spy balloons over America to riots on the streets of France, it has been an eventful start to 2023 — Olav Bjortomt tests your memory of it



51

89



88



49

Under starter's orders

1 Professor Susan Jebb, chairwoman of the Food Standards Agency, said that bringing cake into the office should be seen as harmful to your colleagues in the same way as what?

2 Released on an estate near Basingstoke, which animals returned to Hampshire for the first time in 400 years?

3 Madame Tussauds unveiled a waxwork of which woman for International Women's Day?

4 Which former BBC Breakfast presenter was knocked off his bike while cycling in central Sheffield?

5 Which British scientist thought it was "mind-boggling" that she was made a "Barbie Role Model" in recognition of her achievements in making space and science accessible to girls?

Where were we again?

6 In January Rishi Sunak was criticised for using a plane instead of a train for a trip from London to visit which city's Rutland Lodge medical practice?

7 Which East Sussex market town was named by The Sunday Times as the UK's best place to live?

8 The directorial debut of Raine Allen-Miller, which romantic comedy about two youngsters reeling from bad break-ups is titled after a real-life London location?

9 Which cathedral city is the divorce capital of England and Wales, with official figures showing that 12.8 per cent of its inhabitants were formerly in a marriage or civil partnership?

10 Which quiet town in Suffolk was revealed as the UK's Satanist capital, with census data showing that 70 of its 8,500 inhabitants identified as devil-worshippers?

State of the nation

11 Which journalist co-wrote Matt Hancock's *Pandemic Diaries* and then released the contents of his 100,000 or more WhatsApp messages, saying she believed it was in the "public interest"?

12 Jaswant Singh Chail became the first person in the UK to be convicted of treason since 1981. He was arrested on Christmas Day 2021 having told a protection officer at Windsor Castle, "I am here to kill the Queen," while armed with which weapon?

13 Which police force was widely criticised for its handling of the disappearance of Nicola Bulley?

14 The MCC was forced into a U-turn over its decision to drop the two oldest fixtures at Lord's. Which of these match-ups is not one of them: Army v Navy, Eton v Harrow and the Varsity Match?

15 The blogger Sarah Merker completed a decade-long project to sample which food item at every possible National Trust location: 244 in total?

How much?!

16 Which bookmaker was told to pay £19.2 million — the largest "settlement" in the history of the Gambling Commission — for "widespread and alarming" failures to safeguard customers?

17 Boris Johnson signed a deal with which publisher to write a memoir about his time as prime minister that reportedly could earn him more than £6 million?

18 Which brewery's CEO, James Watt, revealed that he had paid out almost £500,000 to winners of its misleading "solid gold" beer can promotion?

19 The royal fashion blog UFO No More calculated that which royal figure has the most expensive wardrobe, spending €739,541.52 on new clothes last year?

20 Which British oil and gas company recorded an annual profit of £32 billion, the highest in its 115-year history?

Royal affairs

21 King Charles began his first state visit in which city?

22 A gold Tudor chain and pendant discovered in a Warwickshire field by the metal detectorist Charlie Clarke were put on display at the British Museum. The pendant is decorated with the initials of which couple?

23 The first commemorative stamps bearing the head of King Charles III were released. What does the set depict?

24 Which castle's *Catherine & Anne* exhibition about the first two wives of Henry VIII opened in February?

25 Which niece of the King is expecting a child who will become the 13th in line to the throne?

Political manoeuvres

26 David Cameron revived the practice of the prime minister's resignation honours list and nominated 62 people. Theresa May nominated 60. Boris Johnson originally put forward as many as 100. How many did Liz Truss reportedly submit?

27 Who won the SNP leadership election?

28 Containing confidential details about negotiations on the train strikes, the laptop of which rail minister and MP for Bexhill and Battle was snatched from a central London pub?

29 Which new Conservative Party deputy chairman said he backed the death penalty because of its "100 per cent success rate" in preventing reoffending?

30 Which Labour candidate won the West Lancashire by-election?

High tech, low tech

31 The alleged Chinese spy balloon that was shot down off the coast of South Carolina on February 4 has been described as having a height "just five metres short" of which building?

32 The specially modified Boeing 747 jet that attempted to launch the Virgin Orbit rocket "Launcher One" from Spaceport Cornwall into space on January 9 shares its name with which Jamiroquai single?

33 Republicans reacted with fury to Richard Trumka Jr of the US Consumer Product Safety Commission suggesting which appliances might be banned on the grounds that they're a health hazard?

34 Estimated to be 2,400 years old, the world's oldest flush lavatory was found in which country?

35 Reacting to unhappy shareholders, which CEO requested and got a pay cut of more than 40 per cent for 2023, with his "target total compensation" being reduced to $49 million?

Sports report

36 Which Scottish runner broke Paula Radcliffe's British women's 10,000m record?

37 Aged 41, Fernando Alonso is competing in Formula One alongside Lance Stroll for which British team?

38 Designs of a 150m Birmingham bridge planned for the HS2 high-speed rail line were released. It is named after which footballer, who was born in 2003?

39 Defeating England, New Zealand became only the second side in the history of Test cricket to win a match by one run. Which team became the first when they beat Australia in 1993?

40 The Welsh Rugby Union ordered the removal of which Tom Jones hit from the Principality Stadium choirs' song list on the eve of the Six Nations?

World politics

41 Which prime minister cited professional burnout as the reason for her resignation, saying she no longer had "enough in the tank"?

42 In early March, which Ukrainian city's deputy mayor said that its 4,000 remaining civilians were now living in shelters with no access to water, gas or electricity?

43 Japan's prime minister Fumio Kishida warned that his country is "on the brink" of social dysfunction due to which problem?

44 Which country's prime minister called a general election for May 21 in the angry aftermath of its worst-ever rail accident?

45 During protests across France over plans to raise the pension age, which city's town hall was set on fire?

Taking care of business

46 Comparethemarket.com introduced a new animal advertising mascot to annoy the masses. He is Carl the … what?

Answers on page 6





47 With sales rising 23 per cent to £1.5 billion in 2022, which high street chain opened a record 186 stores last year and is aiming for another 150 openings in 2023?

48 Which drinks giant appointed Debra Crew as its first female chief executive?

49 British Airways unveiled its first new uniform in nearly 20 years, designed by which Savile Row tailor?

50 Which pub chain was accused of erasing British culture after a rebranding at its 200 pubs led to all its signs being replaced; for instance, changing Alexander Pope in Twickenham to a single "P"?

Styling it out

51 Sam Smith wore an inflatable black latex jumpsuit at the Brit awards. It is the work of which London designer?

52 The Koh-i-noor diamond will not be used at the coronation by Queen Camilla. Instead she will wear which crown?

53 The Ugandan-Canadian actress Whitney Peak replaced Keira Knightley as the face of which perfume?

54 Which make-up artist covered the pop star Doja Cat with red body paint and 30,000 Swarovski crystals for an appearance at Paris Fashion Week?

55 Animal activists said Kylie Jenner was encouraging real-life "trophy hunting" by wearing a dress adorned with a fake lion's head designed by which fashion house?

Take a bow

56 Jake Brunger and Pippa Cleary have adapted which TV show into a musical that opened at the Noël Coward Theatre?

57 What did Marco Goecke, the now former head of Hanover State Opera's ballet company, smear on the face of the newspaper critic Wiebke Huester?

58 Which singer, who has had 14 Top 40 hits, plays Emmeline Pankhurst in the new hip-hop musical *Sylvia*?

59 Joseph Fiennes was cast in which role in the James Graham play *Dear England*, due to premiere at the National Theatre in June?

60 Producers of popular stage musicals were advised to avoid using marketing phrases such as the "best party in town" in a bid to calm down increasingly rowdy audiences after an Edinburgh production of which musical was halted in January due to a "full-on fist fight" erupting in the crowd?

Food for thought

61 The man Gordon Ramsay cites as his culinary mentor, which French chef's Le Monnaie de Paris restaurant was given a shock downgrade from three-star status to two by Michelin?

62 A study by Which? found that which coffee chain's medium cappuccino contained 325mg of caffeine — almost five times the strength of a cappuccino from Starbucks, which has just 66mg?

63 Toblerone chocolate packaging will no longer feature which Swiss mountain, due to the US owner Mondelez's decision to move some production to Slovakia?

64 Which soft drink was rebranded as Fanta Pineapple & Grapefruit?

65 The environment secretary, Thérèse Coffey, was mocked for suggesting which vegetable could be a suitable alternative for those in short supply, even though the National Farmers' Union president said they are not in season?

Screen testers

66 An auction of scripts and other memorabilia owned by which *Star Wars* actor was called off because his widow, Angie, made a public plea for their return?

67 Who made their movie scriptwriting debut with the rom-com *What's Love Got to Do with It?*?

68 Which 2022 biopic won worst film at the Razzies?

69 Andrea Riseborough was allowed to keep her Oscar nomination for best actress after the Academy launched an investigation into the campaign surrounding the honour. She was nominated for which film?



70 The song *Naatu Naatu* became the first Oscar winner from which Indian film industry?

Art attack

71 Created by Hank Willis Thomas, a newly unveiled sculpture in Boston titled *The Embrace* was inspired by a photo of which man hugging his wife?

72 At the Design Museum Ai Weiwei unveiled his recreation of which impressionist painting made with 650,000 Lego bricks?

73 Margate council dismantled Banksy's *Valentine's Day Mascara* artwork hours after the artist claimed the piece as his. It shows a housewife with a swollen eye and missing tooth shutting a man into what?

74 Which French impressionist's €43 million painting *La Partie de bateau* was acquired by the LVMH group directly from the painter's heirs and donated to the Musée d'Orsay?

75 The heirs of the Jewish collectors Karl and Rosi Adler are suing which New York museum for the return of Picasso's blue period painting *Woman Ironing*?

Around the globe

76 The earthquake that struck Turkey and Syria on February 6 is the deadliest worldwide since which catastrophic earthquake?

77 Cambridge University's Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology agreed to permanently return four Australian Aboriginal spears. Which explorer originally took them?

78 Archaeologists in Egypt unearthed a sphinx statue "with a smiley face and two dimples" near Hathor Temple. It is thought to represent which 1st-century Roman emperor?

79 Which "severe tropical cyclone" devastated the North Island of New Zealand in February?

80 David Ballantyne Smith was sentenced to 13 years and two months in prison for spying for Russia. He was a security guard at the UK embassy in which city?

Musical notes

81 Who won their 32nd Grammy, breaking the record for the artist with the most trophies in the history of the awards show?

82 Which postpunk group competed to represent Ireland at this year's Eurovision Song Contest with the song *Hawaii*?

83 Which group released its 15th studio album, titled *Memento Mori*, in late March?

84 Who announced he was stepping down as general musical director of the Berlin State Opera after more than 30 years for health reasons?

85 Birmingham Royal Ballet announced that it will stage a new ballet about which heavy metal band in September?

TV quickies

86 The BBC hit drama *The Gold* is based on which heist?

87 A blind and autistic 13-year-old named Lucy won which TV talent show?

88 Who replaced Matt Lucas as a host of *The Great British Bake Off*?

89 Starring Riley Keough, the recently bereaved daughter of Lisa Marie Presley, which Amazon Prime Video mini-series is an adaptation of a novel by Taylor Jenkins Reid?

90 An episode of which animated TV series was removed from the Disney+ streaming service in Hong Kong due to a reference to "forced labour camps" in China?

Read 'em and weep

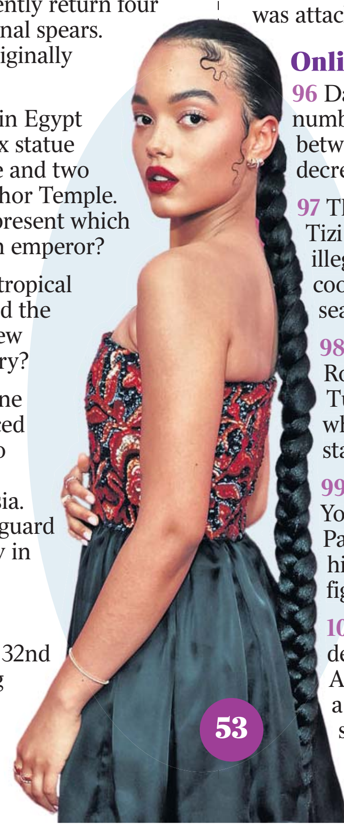
91 Among the changes Puffin Books and the Roald Dahl estate made to Dahl's books was the modification of which character's description from "enormously fat" to "enormous"?

92 Which writer said that he may not be able to walk or write again after suffering a fall in Italy just after Christmas 2022?

93 Simon Armitage wrote a poem to mark 100 years since which steam locomotive entered service?

94 *The Shards* is which American author's first novel in 13 years?

95 Salman Rushdie completed which novel, a magic realist epic about a 15th-century Indian empire, before he was attacked last year?



Online ... offline

96 Data revealed that the number of podcasts launched between 2020 and 2022 decreased by what percentage?

97 The Chinese food blogger Tizi was fined £14,900 for illegally buying and then cooking which endangered sea creature?

98 The internet pioneer Robert Metcalfe won the Turing award for inventing which local-area networking standard?

99 Which Briton defeated the YouTuber turned boxer Jake Paul by a split decision in the highest-grossing eight-round fight in history?

100 Which musician described an attempt by the AI chatbot ChatGPT to write a song based on his work — sample lyric: "I am the darkness, I am the light" — as "a grotesque mockery of what it is to be human"?

Ask Professor Tanya Byron

My mother is self-obsessed and thinks I am a failure

Q I think my mother is a narcissist. She is self-obsessed and has always been overinvested in her looks (she is very glamorous), and the way I look has always been a disappointment to her. I am never thin enough, my boyfriends are not rich enough and my job not high-status enough.

Recently I gave up my job in the City to train as a yoga teacher and it led to our worst ever row. I had a period in my twenties when I stopped speaking to her for a year after therapy made me realise that my mother was essentially bullying me. Now that I have children I don't want to stop them from having a grandmother, but she is so consumed by her vanity and belief that we should all prioritise her feelings that at times it makes me want to scream. How can I find a way to tolerate her for my children's sake?
Michelle

A You describe a mother who displays the classic traits of a narcissist: an inflated sense of self, need for attention, poor/few boundaries, little or no empathy for others, deep-seated insecurities and verbal aggression. Such mothers can be extremely challenging for their children, and in particular daughters, who they will see as an extension of themselves and so criticise and shame them if they don't match up to their expectations (in terms of how they look, who they date, their career etc). The tactics used can be extremely abusive, including gaslighting (psychological manipulation to cause another to doubt their beliefs so as to gain power and control), guilt-tripping and stonewalling (refusing to communicate), with a constant violation of the relationship boundaries.

A narcissistic parent, absorbed with themselves, will never be able to fully attend to their child's needs and will struggle to validate them, often expressing disappointment in them. They will show self-confidence in a fragile and grandiose way and so be hypersensitive to any perceived criticism, while themselves being overly critical of others. Because a narcissist expects special treatment, they are often disappointed in those closest to them, who can never give as much as the narcissist feels entitled to receive. This means that any child will never feel good enough, creating significant issues with self-esteem.

A narcissistic mother cannot see the damage she is causing and instead will see her behaviour as encouraging and supporting her child to be the best they can be. When you gave up your career to become a yoga teacher, rather than being pleased that you were finally doing what gave you a sense of purpose and fulfilment, your mother was furious because she lost the opportunity to bask in the glory of your probably more lucrative City job. The row you had represents how this became all about her and how you let her down. She might genuinely have been confused as to why you were so angry and justify her negative reaction to your career change as only wanting the best for you. In reality, she will probably believe that others will think her daughter has committed career suicide and that this reflects badly on her.

I'm interested in the year of no contact and why you decided to resume it. An understandable and often necessary reaction to being bullied is to end the relationship with the bully — to cleanse that toxic situation from one's life. It is, however, extremely problematic when the bully is a parent or sibling and, as you have found, such estrangements rarely last. I can also understand that now you are a mother, you don't want to deny your children the opportunity to have a relationship with their grandmother. Indeed, given the unconditional love that grandchildren provide, she might turn out to be a better grandmother than she is a mother.

> “Try to accept that her narcissism is not your fault — it is hard-wired



Your only solution is to either estrange yourself again or to accept your mother for who she is and learn to be less affected by her actions. Try to accept that her narcissism is not your fault — it is hard-wired, an established pattern of beliefs and behaviours. What she says and does is not about you but a reflection of who she is. Of course, all this is easier said than done, but unless you manage this, not only will you continue to be stressed and unhappy, but your children will sense these feelings in you. This means that while your mother will violate boundaries, you nonetheless need to set them and hold on to them. Be clear about what you can and cannot tolerate, especially when it comes to the things you are prepared for your children to be exposed to.

Look to your values, those that you want to develop in your children, and when your mother does things that contradict those values, work out your exit strategy. Remember that being calm is your power, whereas being emotional opens the door for manipulation and blame. A narcissist thrives on the emotion of others, especially since it can provide a reason to be the victim.

Staying calm and holding your boundaries with your mother will be challenging because this is what you have struggled with and so you could easily fall into the well-choreographed pattern of argument with her. An incredibly effective strategy — which sounds almost too simple — is to breathe through the rage that gets triggered. Breathing brings down the physiological response that triggers anger. Many types of breathing patterns help with different challenges — you need “balance breathing” that follows a 4-2-4 inhale-hold-exhale pattern.

I suggest you also research narcissism because knowledge is power and in so doing you can shift yourself from a helpless and angry place to one where you understand what you are experiencing as your mother's pathology and not yours. Never expect an apology and don't try to have a meaningful conversation that might lead to one — you are only setting yourself up to fail. Don't believe that you can change your mother — personality traits can only change if the person themselves wants that change. Your estrangement will have shown you that even losing contact with you for a year didn't lead your mother to reflect and try to change her behaviour.

To do all this you need to find your confidence in the face of a woman who has been putting you down for years. Until you address this, despite all best intentions when faced with your mother's behaviour, the hurt and angry child inside you will be triggered and, as you describe, will want to scream. I recommend that you consider working with a therapist to untangle yourself from your mother's narcissism.

Your mother is who she is, she won't change. It might be that in time, and with a good therapist, you will understand the fragility that underpins her behaviour, and as you detach yourself from the impacts of what she says and does, learn to feel some compassion for a woman who has never been completely comfortable in her skin — I wonder what she experienced to cause this. Indeed, when you took the positive career step towards what felt truly meaningful for you, while this might have baffled your mother, somewhere deep down she might also have envied you.

If you would like Professor Tanya Byron's help, email proftanyabyron@thetimes.co.uk

The big Easter bank holiday quiz answers

Under starter's orders
1 Passive smoking
2 Beavers
3 Emmeline Pankhurst
4 Dan Walker
5 Maggie Aderin-Pocock

Where were we again?
6 Leeds
7 Wadhurst
8 *Rye Lane*
9 Norwich
10 Bungay

State of the nation
11 Isabel Oakeshott
12 Crossbow
13 Lancashire Constabulary
14 Army v Navy
15 Scone

How much?!
16 William Hill
17 HarperCollins
18 BrewDog
19 Princess Charlene of Monaco
20 Shell

Royal affairs
21 Berlin
22 Henry VIII and Catherine of Aragon
23 Garden flowers
24 Hever Castle
25 Princess Eugenie


41

Political manoeuvres
26 4
27 Humza Yousaf
28 Huw Merriman
29 Lee Anderson
30 Ashley Dalton

High tech, low tech
31 Sydney Opera House
32 *Cosmic Girl*
33 Gas stoves
34 China (Xi'an)
35 Tim Cook, Apple

Sports report
36 Eilish McColgan
37 Aston Martin
38 Jude Bellingham
39 West Indies
40 *Delilah*

World politics
41 New Zealand's Jacinda Ardern
42 Bakhmut
43 Low birth rate
44 Greece
45 Bordeaux

Taking care of business
46 Wombat
47 Greggs
48 Diageo
49 Ozwald Boateng
50 Young's

Styling it out
51 Harri
52 Queen Mary's crown
53 Coco Mademoiselle
54 Pat McGrath
55 Schiaparelli

Take a bow
56 *The Great British Bake Off*
57 Dog faeces
58 Beverley Knight
59 Gareth Southgate
60 *Jersey Boys*

Food for thought
61 Guy Savoy
62 Costa
63 Matterhorn
64 Lilt
65 Turnip

Screen testers
66 Peter Mayhew
67 Jemima Khan
68 *Blonde*
69 *To Leslie*
70 Tollywood

Art attack
71 Martin Luther King Jr
72 Monet's *Water Lilies*
73 A freezer
74 Gustave Caillebotte
75 Guggenheim Museum


73

Around the globe
76 2010 Haiti
77 James Cook
78 Claudius
79 Cyclone Gabrielle
80 Berlin

Musical notes
81 Beyoncé
82 Public Image Ltd
83 Depeche Mode
84 Daniel Barenboim
85 Black Sabbath

TV quickies
86 1983 Brink's-Mat robbery
87 *The Piano*
88 Alison Hammond
89 *Daisy Jones & the Six*
90 *The Simpsons*

Read 'em and weep
91 Augustus Gloop
92 Hanif Kureishi
93 Flying Scotsman
94 Bret Easton Ellis
95 *Victory City*

Online … offline
96 80 per cent
97 Great white shark
98 Ethernet
99 Tommy Fury
100 Nick Cave

Bank holiday Jumbo crossword

Jumbo crossword No 1608

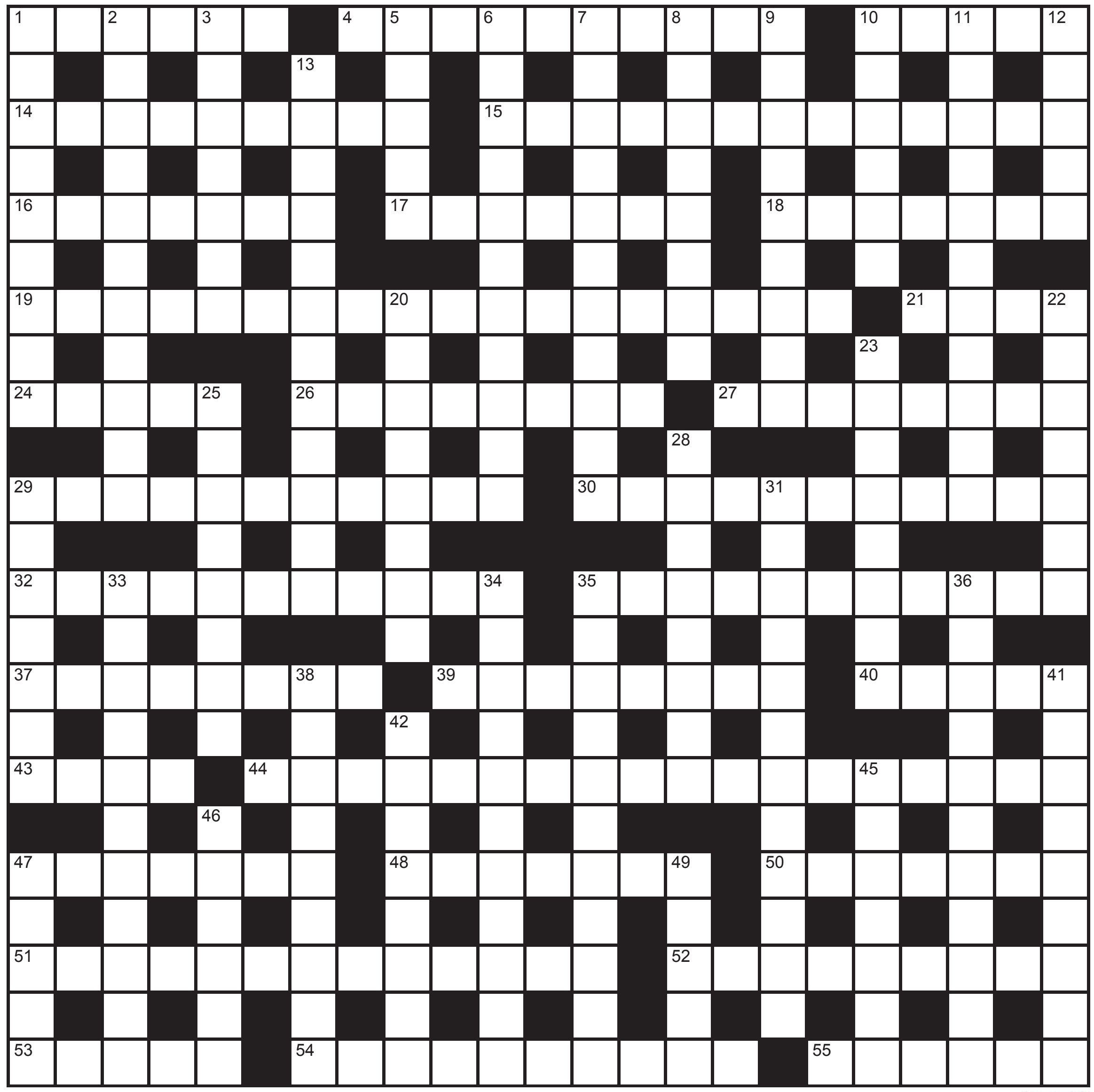
Cryptic clues

Across

1 Provide with some flexibility (6)
4 Those spotted in historical Croatian region? (10)
10 Preserve licence, say, for dog (5)
14 A bloke carrying boy round drink (9)
15 Godfather in agreement, perhaps, with important oil supplier (7,6)
16 Disinfected blister I left to shrink (7)
17 Car manufacturer close to Oxford, one intending to import first of Ladas (7)
18 Dissertation originally by old maestro, dramatised (7)
19 That criticism was just some advice to headgear's buyer? (2,3,3,4,4,2)
21 Second before now (4)
24 Ship returning banks on European currency (5)
26 Knowledge gathered about fall in old French province (8)
27 Sloe gin, a strange motor fuel! (8)
29 Serve grotty stuff and give the game away? (4,3,4)
30 One's as stupid, apparently, when news is slow (5,6)
32 Sticky bat compiler wielded (11)
35 Put down location of bench in sporting arena (6,5)
37 Embarrassed: like you, reportedly? (8)
39 Sneakiness evident if loading lorry with last of merchandise (8)
40 See you grabbing tail of sleek otter (5)
43 Heading off, poach bird (4)
44 Exaggerate awfully witty Orwellian oath (3,2,2,4,1,6)
47 Emotional teacher's first lecture (7)
48 Samples in vegetables eyed, first of swedes eaten (7)
50 A way past disagreement on reflection, initially (2,5)
51 For each family conflict, gesture old pretender (6,7)
52 Arguably, what might grip opera lover about a show from the '80s (5,4)
53 Nothing in eastern half of country, Switzerland (5)
54 Semi-intelligible character wanting land redistributed: do nothing about that (6,4)
55 Broadcast dark period piece (6)

Down

1 Laugh initially nailed by halfwits, instant comedy (9)
2 High-sounding holy shrouds on canvas (11)
3 Remove from church where US city is icebound (7)
5 Nothing consumed by hungry duck (5)
6 Characteristic of chaps crossing perfect stretch of water (5,6)
7 Game involving king in victories that are tight? (11)
8 Song in a code relating to hives (8)
9 Miss warning: "broadcast on air" (9)
10 Herb, Charlie and Romeo (6)
11 Women wanting fig leaves for plant (5,6)
12 Sober plug for spirit (5)
13 Nine of diamonds? (8,4)
20 Ordinal throwing relationship in river (8)
22 Holding underwater device with all toes, maybe, look up (7)
23 Current failure has United team in first position going the wrong way (5,3)
25 Insect has taken fly off gazelle, say (8)
28 Tailored suit, dull coats for musician (8)
29 Matter dropped when top side hammered (7)
31 Old Middle Eastern leader a long way off grabbed by sailor with effort, after capsizing (6,6)
33 More than 35 imperial gallons of oil in a pickle (4,1,6)
34 Alloy wheels stolen, be furious! (6,5)
35 Last of vermouth in drink drunk on the rocks, perhaps? (11)
36 Enduring war, tragically futile (11)
38 Drunk welcome beyond Devon etc (9)
41 Share fortune soldiers locked up with key (9)
42 Plunge has sea bird catching a fly, say (8)
45 Punk with green hair brushed up (7)
46 Piscatorial, maybe, and cold? (6)
47 Stone to kill, sent skywards (5)
49 Plant philosopher pulled up (5)



Name..

Address..

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.... Postcode....................................

Phone number...

Prizes



The prize for each of the first correct solutions to the Cryptic and times2 Jumbo clues to be opened will be a collection of Times reference books — including *The Times Universal Atlas of the World, Collins English Dictionary & Thesaurus,* and *Bradford's Crossword Solver's Dictionary* published by HarperCollins. Entries should be marked "Cryptic" or "times2" and sent to: The Times Jumbo Crossword 1608, PO Box 2164, Colchester, Essex CO2 8LJ; or emailed to: jumbo@thetimes.co.uk, with "Cryptic 1608" or "times2 1608" in the subject line, to arrive by April 20. Open to 18+, UK & ROI residents only. The winners and the solutions will be published on April 22.

Thinking space

For more crosswords and your favourite puzzles go to thetimes.co.uk

times2 clues

Across

1 Set of four (6)
4 Junior kitchen worker (6,4)
10 Composer of *The Merry Widow* (5)
14 Relating to the belly (9)
15 Showing constantly changing patterns (13)
16 Sudden burst of extravagance (7)
17 Night-time condensate (7)
18 In a sugary manner (7)
19 Founder of Westminster Abbey (6,3,9)
21 Religious faction (4)
24 Hard-wearing cotton fabric (5)
26 Lacking skill or knowledge (8)
27 Council member (8)
29 Revive from unconsciousness (11)
30 Fifty-fifty (4-3-4)
32 Domestic space (7,4)
35 Involved with teaching (11)
37 Exchange made as a compromise (5-3)
39 Giving medical care to (8)
40 Arrangement of dress (3-2)
43 Drive out (4)
44 Authority to build (8,10)
47 Lay down with authority (7)
48 Covered against loss (7)
50 Releasing device (7)
51 Studier of legal offences and those who commit them (13)
52 Injury from extreme cold (9)
53 Unable to relax (5)
54 German city on the Rhine (10)
55 Covered (6)

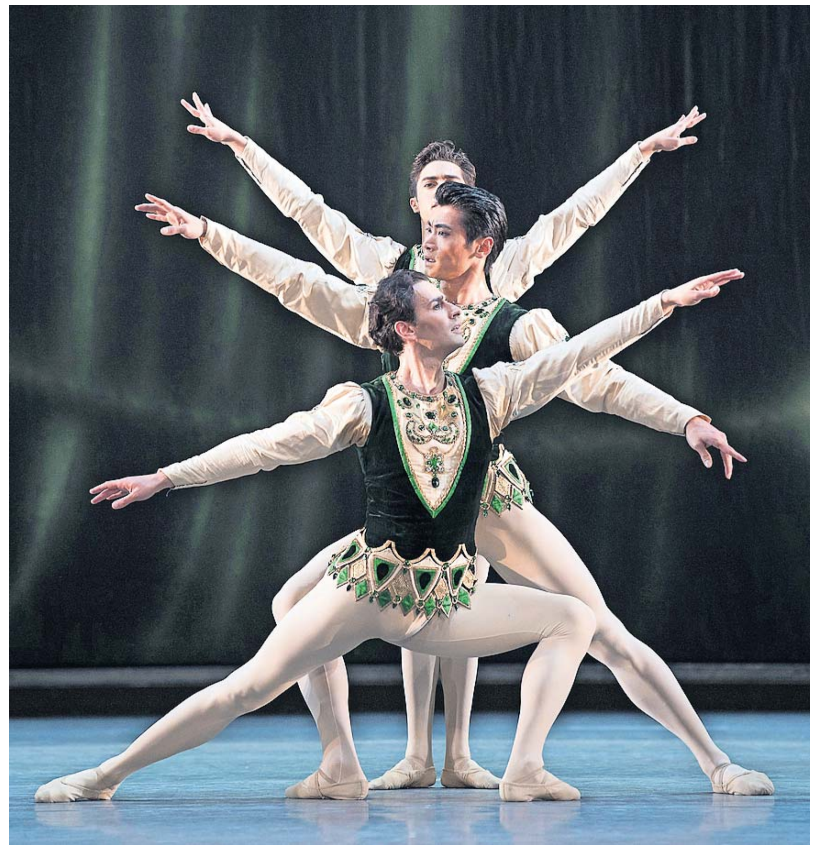
Down

1 Rise above, surpass (9)
2 Flipping game (11)
3 Romantic adorer (7)
5 Drunk; lubricated (5)
6 Indulge in hilarious fun (4,7)
7 Inlet of the Irish Sea between England and Scotland (6,5)
8 Bald (8)
9 Leg rest (9)
10 Small case worn on a chain (6)
11 Abnormally low body temperature (11)
12 Unsteady, unstable (5)
13 Amusing (12)
20 Lift (8)
22 Melodious (7)
23 Young plant (8)
25 Olivier —, French composer (8)
28 Using suggestion rather than explicit mention (8)
29 Rice dish (7)
31 Combination (of organisations) (12)
33 Instance of buying or selling (11)
34 Tool for separating rope strands (11)
35 Overstated (11)
36 District of west London (7,4)
38 Lie (9)
41 Regular correspondent (3,6)
42 Surrounding area (8)
45 Saliva (7)
46 Small travelling bag (6)
47 Former gold coin (5)
49 Postpone (5)

arts

‘The energy is very Australian, we aren’t dealing with a lot of ego’

David Hallberg, director of the Australian Ballet, talks to Debra Craine about beating injury and depression and bringing Jewels to Covent Garden









Right, top and middle: Jewels performed by the Royal Ballet at Covent Garden in 2017. Below: the artists of the Australian Ballet. Far right: David Hallberg, director of the Australian Ballet

David Hallberg thought he had it sorted. He had planned to bring *Kunstkamer* to London this summer for his first international tour as director of the Australian Ballet. A two-act Dutch contemporary ballet by a quartet of choreographers, *Kunstkamer* was chosen to highlight the eclecticism and energy of his Melbourne-based dancers.

But things got a little messy in February when one of those four choreographers hit the headlines. The German director Marco Goecke was so incensed by a critic’s scathing review of one of his works that he confronted her at Hanover’s opera house and smeared dog faeces on her face. That was the end of Goecke — who was duly fired as ballet director

> **Marco Goecke’s behaviour wasn’t acceptable and has consequences**

in Hanover — and the end of *Kunstkamer* as an acceptable calling card for the Australian Ballet.

“It was an absolute extreme response to a bad review and I think everybody would agree that Goecke’s behaviour wasn’t acceptable and unfortunately has consequences,” Hallberg says. “So we made the decision to change the repertoire for London. I wanted to show the company in the most positive and celebratory light and if there is something celebratory and sparkling, it’s *Jewels*.”

In a way, the German did the Australians a favour. George Balanchine’s *Jewels*, one of the glories of the 20th-century classical repertoire, is a far easier sell for the ballet crowd than the quirky, unfamiliar *Kunstkamer* would have been. Created in 1967 and inspired by a visit to the Fifth Avenue jewellers Van Cleef & Arpels, each of Balanchine’s three acts is devoted to a particular jewel and dance style and is performed by a different cast. *Emeralds*, with music by Fauré, evokes the ethereal romance of 19th-century French ballet; *Rubies*, with music by Stravinsky, epitomises the jazzy attack of the 20th-century American style developed by Balanchine; and *Diamonds*, set to Tchaikovsky, is a tribute to the grand, tutued splendour of the Russian tradition that gave the world *The Sleeping Beauty*.

There will be five performances of *Jewels* in the London season, while on the final Sunday the company will present a matinee gala to cap its year-long 60th anniversary celebrations (the Australian Ballet was founded by the London-born Peggy van Praagh). The gala will feature classical and contemporary ballets by Rudolf Nureyev, Yuri Possokhov, Pam Tanowitz and the Australian choreographer Alice Topp. A lot is riding on this London season, an important first stop on the company’s return to foreign touring after the pandemic. Although the Australian Ballet has visited the UK on numerous occasions (starting in 1965) it hasn’t performed at the Royal Opera House in 35 years.

For Hallberg, one of the world’s most sublime and acclaimed male dancers, the London season has a special resonance. The American star danced on the Royal Opera House stage many times in many guises and feels a close personal connection to the theatre. “I’ve danced with the Mariinsky on that stage, with the Bolshoi and with the Royal Ballet,” says Hallberg, chatting via Zoom from his office in Melbourne. “I’ve been sort of a mutt of the dance world going from company to company on the same stage.”

And without intending it to be so, Covent Garden also marked the end of his international career as a dancer three years ago, two months shy of his 38th birthday. A guest artist with the Royal Ballet, he had just partnered Natalia Osipova in *The Sleeping Beauty* (their performances together still burn in my memory) and was in rehearsals for *Swan Lake* “when all the theatres in London shut down. So that was my retirement as a dancer.”

What we didn’t know at the time was that during those *Swan Lake* rehearsals Hallberg flew to Melbourne for his final interview with the Australian Ballet’s board of directors, who duly hired him to succeed David McAllister, soon to retire after 20 years as director.

Hallberg relocated to Australia in January 2021, but his first year in the job was nothing like he imagined.

“Melbourne was at one stage the most locked-down city in the world,” he says. “We went through lockdown after lockdown after lockdown. We virtually cancelled our entire year of performances.

“It forced me to look internally. We had an exemption from the government allowing us — as elite athletes — to keep training in the studio. I started to shape the technique of the dancers, I taught class, we did workshops, I really worked with the

TIMES+
Win tickets
To celebrate the Australian Ballet’s 60th anniversary, Times+ members have the chance to win one of 30 pairs of tickets to the company’s performance of one of George Balanchine’s most loved works, Jewels, at the Royal Opera House on Thursday, August 3. Visit mytimesplus.co.uk to enter

PIERRE TOUSSAINT; ALASTAIR MUIR/SHUTTERSTOCK; KATE LONGLEY



dancers, which was beautiful. And I got my feet under the desk without the sheer pace that this company works at. We do at least 160 performances a year; the schedule here is insane."

The Australian Ballet has never danced *Jewels* before, but by the time the dancers reach London they will have two dozen performances of it under their belt. "*Jewels* is a test for any company," Hallberg says. "It's a huge work, with a huge cast, and each of the three acts is nothing like the other ones stylistically. Yes, it will be a challenge, but one of the great strengths of the Australian dancers is their versatility. They are not honed in one particular style, one way of schooling, and what I love is that I've thrown a lot of repertoire at them and they just sink their teeth right into it. In the two years I've been artistic director I have seen these dancers blossom and grow in confidence, grow in individuality. I'm really proud of the company we are becoming."

What gives the Australians their own identity? "There is a stylistic homogeneity to the company but it isn't the kind of style you think of, such as that of the Vaganova School or the School of American Ballet. It's more about the energy on stage. The energy is very Australian in that it's very human, very open and there's a real can-do attitude. We are not dealing with a lot of ego. What we have here in this company is

> "What we have in this company is positivity and democracy

something I've never experienced anywhere — it's the positivity and the democracy. Everyone has a go, everyone is in it together."

Hallberg is now passing on the lessons he learnt as a globe-trotting dancer. A leading light with the American Ballet Theatre in New York for many years, he also pursued an exhausting career as a guest artist and made history in 2011 when he became the first American to be appointed a principal dancer with the Bolshoi in Moscow. "I look back on my time with the Bolshoi with such fondness," he says. "I learnt a completely new language of ballet and I was welcomed so warmly by the theatre, by audiences. I made a huge sacrifice leaving my comfort zone in New York but I have no regrets."

Unfortunately his time at the Bolshoi was cut short by a devastating foot injury that kept him off stage for more than two years. Spiralling into depression after two surgeries failed to fix the problem, he decided to remove himself from the constant pressures in New York and seek out the highly regarded rehabilitation team at the Australian Ballet. In November 2015 he bought a one-way ticket to Melbourne and spent the next 14 months in recovery and retraining, a herculean task that he wrote about in his very revealing — and highly readable — 2017 memoir, *A Body of Work: Dancing to the Edge and Back*.

Will he ever dance again? "I probably never will," says the 40-year-old. "I'm teaching class and imparting the tools I was taught around the world. But I am not in tights any more. Yet I have to say I don't miss it all that much. I'm still very much a part of the dance world and I always will be, adding to it, questioning it, challenging it. But once I got back from injury towards the end of my dancing career I was riddled with doubt and fear, and I let it get the best of me. Now as an artistic director my experiences at the Royal Ballet, at American Ballet Theatre, at La Scala, at the Bolshoi and the Mariinsky come pouring out of me and I can give something back. I feel so purposeful, so motivated. I am honestly happy not to be in the spotlight any more."

What are his plans for the company? "I feel a huge responsibility to give the dancers, to give audiences, an experience they haven't yet had and give them repertoire they haven't seen, as well as nurturing, commissioning and developing the creative community here in Australia. I want to push the dancers to their limits, physically, technically, artistically. I want to use my experiences and connections to build a company that has its own identity and isn't trying to be any of the places where I danced."

In his memoir Hallberg also talks about the restlessness and the loneliness that seem to go hand in hand with his extraordinary career. Has any of that changed now that he is settled into a new life down under? "I have conquered the restlessness, in that I don't need to bounce around to be fulfilled. That was my Achilles' heel as a dancer — I bounced around too much and I got injured because I couldn't take the load I gave myself.

"On the other hand, I haven't conquered the loneliness. I am seeing someone — we've been together about a year. He's not a dancer, he lives in Sydney. But regardless of love in my life I think I will always be this kind of lonely roamer because of where life has propelled me. Dance was like a huge gust of wind pushing me forward and I had no choice but to go with it. I still feel that way, and although it comes with a lack of normalcy I wouldn't live my life any other way."

The Australian Ballet is at the Royal Opera House August 2-6. Public booking opens on April 13, roh.org.uk

ARNAUD MBAKI



Jeff Goldblum's shambling charisma brought intimacy to the Royal Festival Hall

jazz

Jeff Goldblum
Royal Festival Hall
★★★★☆

The star began, as is his wont, as his own warm-up man. Twenty minutes before showtime, one of the few 70-year-olds who can carry off a leather jacket and skintight trouser combo loped on stage to quiz early birds. Where were they from, Jeff asked. Could they sing the Norwegian national anthem? The Polish one? Ragged singalongs to the hits of *Annie* plus *Fly Me to the Moon* had already erupted before Goldblum's six-piece Mildred Snitzer Orchestra (so-named after a family friend) took up its post.

The show proper — the actor's biggest in London since making his first jazz album aged 66 — started with Charles Mingus's *Nostalgia in Times Square*. It was typical of the bluesy, hepcat sound that the band revel in — tunes by Horace Silver, Hank Mobley — the brand of hard bop rudely sidelined by the advent of the Beatles. As each besuited player took the spotlight, Goldblum scatted, grinned, adding Ellington-like flourishes on his piano before contributing a neat solo of his own. A Hammond organist, Joe Bagg, was on hand to perform a good deal of the keyboard heavy lifting.

After the opening blues, back to the banter: the audience were invited to compare the merits of US and UK cuisine. Much eye-rolling from Goldblum at the concept of a Scotch egg. A breezy instrumental mash-up of *In the Wee Small Hours of the Morning* and *Waters of March* followed before the first vocal spot. Mattiel Brown performed middling versions of *Moon River* and *My Baby Just Cares for Me;* the indie rock singer seemed a curious choice (perhaps explained by her releasing a song called *Jeff Goldblum* in 2021). More convincing was Emma Smith, one third of the Puppini Sisters, whose highlight was a smoulder through *Lazy Afternoon*. That was preceded by more japery as Goldblum was tested on English slang — bog roll, boat race — with more opportunities for the signature quizzical eyebrow.

At such moments it wasn't clear whether we were watching a jazz concert or An Audience with Jeff Goldblum. Not that anyone cared: with his shambling charisma the star of *Jurassic Park* and *Independence Day* had reduced a cavernous hall to the intimacy of a small nightclub. After the band signed off with a quote from the *Jurassic Park* theme, the applause was long and thunderous.

John Bungey

times2

Your weekday brain boost

More puzzles Pages 14-16

Every day, Monday to Thursday, a page of extra puzzles to give your brain an extended workout

Samurai easy

Fill each grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. Where the puzzles overlap, the rows and columns do not go beyond their usual length.

	3			9				6				4				1			7	
6		5			1	2		9						1	2			9		
2	8			4		3	5	1				7	2	3		9			4	5
9	6			7		5								5		2			9	1
					5	8									3					
8		2	1				6						7		9		1	6		3
			9	5												3	9			
	7				3													8	5	
3	9				8										8				6	7
								1	9		4	6								
							7		2		1		8							
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4	7				3										3				8	1
	5	3													6				4	
			7	5												7	2			
9		1	5		2		4						6				4	1		2
					1									5	1					
3	8			7		6								4		6			7	3
5	4			6		3	7	2				5	8	3		1			2	4
		2			7	1						6		2	5			3		8
	1			2				6				1				2			9	

Sudoku super fiendish

					3			
				8		5	4	
				7		2	6	
					8			
	2	1			6	4		
3			4	2			1	9
	7	3		4				
	4	2			5			6
					9		3	

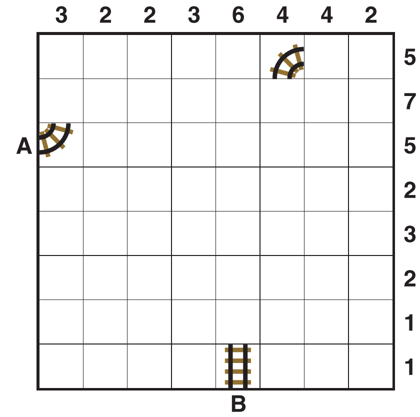
Killer deadly

Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. Each set of cells joined by dotted lines must add up to the target number in its top-left corner. Within each set of cells joined by dotted lines, a digit cannot be repeated.

7	21			8			23	
	14			21				
	20		7	12			16	
24					13		17	
	15		22		10			28
			16				10	
23	22			12		19		
					17			
						8		

Train Tracks

Lay tracks to enable the train to travel from village A to village B. The numbers indicate how many sections of rail go in each row and column. There are only straight rails and curved rails. The track cannot cross itself.

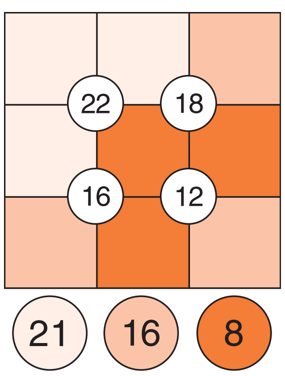


Futoshiki

Fill the blank squares so that every row and column contains each of the numbers 1 to 5 once only. The symbols between the squares indicate whether a number is larger (>) or smaller (<) than the number next to it.

□		□		□		□		□
		∧		∨		∨		
□		□	<	□		□		□
□		□		4		□		□
∧						∨		
□	<	□		□		□		□
						∨		
3		□		□		□		□

Suko



Place the numbers 1 to 9 in the spaces so that the number in each circle is equal to the sum of the four surrounding spaces, and each colour total is correct

Solve Times puzzles interactively with same-day solutions at thetimes.co.uk

Codeword

Every letter in the crossword-style grid, right, has been substituted for a number from 1 to 26. Each letter of the alphabet appears in the grid at least once. Use the letters already provided to work out the identity of further letters. Enter letters in the main grid and the smaller reference grid until all 26 letters of the alphabet have been accounted for. Proper nouns are excluded.

17	11	25	16	3	17	14	■	9	11	19	2	6
18	■	5	■	17	■	7	2	17	■	6	■	13
6	7	4	15	7	4	20	■	10	7	22	5	25
4	■	17	■	15	■	6	2	17	■	20 K	■	4
25	11	13	7	■	1	■	■	11	23	6	■	7
■	■	6	21	26	4	6	23	23	■	19	1	13
7	■	■	6	■	1	■	17	■	26	■	■	25
8	7 A	4	■	6	23	12	11	1	4	6	■	■
10	■	1	3	3	■	■	3	■	17	13	11	23
23	■	19	■	19	6	14	■	26	■	24	■	6
15	7	1	24	6	■	7	3	3	7	10	6	19
7	■	13	■	23	1	4 R	■	7	■	15	■	7
3	1	2	5	25	■	19	11	13	2	6	17	13

~~A~~ B C D E F G H I J ~~K~~ L M N O P Q ~~R~~ S T U V W X Y Z

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13
			R			A						
14	15	16	17	18	19	20	21	22	23	24	25	26
						K						

Mini Sudoku

Fill in the so that every column, every row and every 3x2 box contains the digits 1 to 6

2					
	4	6		5	
			4	2	
			6	1	
	5	1		6	
4					

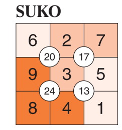
Solutions in tomorrow's Times2

Thursday's solutions

SAMURAI

8	3	2	9	6	4	1	5	7				1	3	7	2	6	9	5	8	4
1	4	6	8	7	5	9	3	2				4	8	9	5	1	3	7	2	6
5	7	9	1	3	2	4	8	6				5	6	2	8	7	4	1	9	3
4	1	5	2	9	8	6	7	3				8	2	1	6	4	7	3	5	9
9	8	7	6	4	3	2	1	5				6	9	4	3	2	5	8	1	7
2	6	3	5	1	7	8	4	9				3	7	5	9	8	1	4	6	2
3	9	4	7	2	1	5	6	8	9	4	7	2	1	3	4	5	6	9	7	8
6	5	1	3	8	9	7	2	4	3	8	1	9	5	6	7	3	8	2	4	1
7	2	8	4	5	6	3	9	1	6	2	5	7	4	8	1	9	2	6	3	5
						9	3	7	4	5	8	6	2	1						
						2	1	5	7	3	6	4	8	9						
						4	8	6	2	1	9	3	7	5						
9	2	7	4	1	8	6	5	3	1	7	4	8	9	2	4	3	1	7	6	5
8	4	6	5	2	3	1	7	9	8	6	2	5	3	4	6	7	9	1	2	8
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5	8	2	7	3	1	9	6	4				7	8	9	5	1	2	6	3	4
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6	7	3	2	4	9	5	8	1				6	4	5	3	9	7	8	1	2
7	3	9	6	8	2	4	1	5				2	5	8	7	6	3	4	9	1
2	6	5	1	9	4	7	3	8				9	7	3	1	8	4	2	5	6
4	1	8	3	7	5	2	9	6				4	1	6	9	2	5	3	8	7

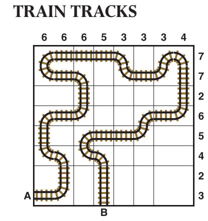
SUKO



MINI SUDOKU

5	6	1	4	2	3
2	3	4	1	6	5
6	1	5	3	4	2
3	4	2	6	5	1
1	2	6	5	3	4
4	5	3	2	1	6

TRAIN TRACKS



FUTOSHIKI

1		4		3		5		2
		∧						
3		5		1	<	2		4
								∨
2	>	1		5		4		3
5		2		4		3		1
∨								∧
4	>	3		2	>	1		5

SUDOKU

2	9	4	7	8	3	6	5	1
6	8	3	1	4	5	2	7	9
7	5	1	9	2	6	3	4	8
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1	7	9	5	3	4	8	6	2
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8	3	6	4	9	1	5	2	7
9	1	2	3	5	7	4	8	6
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KILLER

4	5	9	6	7	2	3	1	8
6	8	7	1	3	5	2	9	4
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7	1	5	2	9	6	8	4	3
2	6	3	8	4	1	7	5	9
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CODEWORD

Q	U	I	C	K	L	Y	■	C	R	E	E	P
U	■	M	■	I	■	E	■	L	■	X	■	A
A	P	P	A	L	■	O	V	E	R	T	L	Y
S	■	E	■	O	■	M	■	F	■	R	■	E
H	O	L	O	G	R	A	M	■	W	E	R	E
E	■	■	■	R	■	N	■	A	■	M	■	■
D	I	S	M	A	L	■	U	N	L	E	S	S
■	■	N	■	M	■	H	■	A	■	■	■	I
E	Y	E	D	■	W	A	T	C	H	D	O	G
L	■	E	■	J	■	R	■	O	■	I	■	H
B	A	Z	O	O	K	A	■	N	I	G	H	T
O	■	E	■	I	■	S	■	D	■	I	■	E
W	I	D	E	N	■	S	W	A	T	T	E	D

Foul murder has rarely been this feelgood

Carol Midgley
TV review



Why Didn't They Ask Evans?
ITV1
★★★★☆

TV is confusing these days, isn't it? If you subscribe to Britbox, you're probably wondering why ITV ran Hugh Laurie's adaptation of *Why Didn't They Ask Evans?* last night when Britbox did so at this time last year (when I also reviewed it, so apologies if anyone is experiencing déjà vu while reading this. Me too).

But let's assume most of you came to it fresh. And what about that titular line? It must be hard for any actor when their one line, their only line, is the title of the show. The sheer *pressure* of it. You've got a vanishingly small chance of *not* making it sound comically hammy. And so it proved. Our poor chap splatted at the bottom of the cliff, grasped the arm of Will Poulter's Bobby Jones and spoke his cryptic last words, "Why didn't they ask Evans?", with all the gravitas of a *Neighbours* blooper. But that's my one quibble done.

The rest of Hugh Laurie's handsome adaptation of Agatha Christie's 1934 novel was pure, dreamy escapism, which sounds insensitive when it features a succession of gory deaths, but that's Christie for you. She's the queen of turning foulest murder into a comforting, feelgood snack.

Laurie not only adapted and directed it, he appeared in it too, possibly also manning the catering van. He played it straight, going for quality over gimmick and resisting the temptation to primp or over-modernise, which was probably wise because Christie fans tend to be purists who snark easily. There was nothing to offend them here: it was a faithful rendition with added wit. At one point I did fancy that someone had called the other a "prick" until I realised they'd said "prig".

As a Christie devotee, I find this one of her more meandering plots with not one of her best denouements (this is split into three parts whereas on Britbox it was a three-hour one-parter), but Laurie does a terrific job of drawing every character with a fine pencil and sprinkling a lovely light-touch humour while inserting gorgeous pastoral scenes.


Lucy Boynton was a cut above as the cut-glass Lady Frances

And when you can spaff actors of the calibre of Jim Broadbent and Emma Thompson on cameo roles lasting only a few seconds it shows you have friends in high places. Both their cameos as batty posho aristocrats were beautifully done, Thompson shrieking eccentrically over a missing green suede glove. Later on Paul Whitehouse got a substantial, equally well-observed part as the innkeeper at the Anglers' Arms, which had fish room keys, an in-joke nod to *Mortimer & Whitehouse: Gone Fishing* no doubt. There's some heft in this production.

The absolute star turn, though, was Lucy Boynton as "posh girl who likes the vicar's boy" Lady Frances. Boynton is like Claire Foy: she has one of those lovely faces that just manages to hold the screen and, like Foy, can act with a mere twitch of her mouth. The camera lingers on her shamelessly. She and Poulter pulled off persuasive chemistry as childhood friends who bickered but seemed to be falling in love while turning into sleuths. Which they had to do because this is an Agatha Christie set in a chocolate-box village that doesn't feature Miss Marple.

Any writer who takes on Christie takes a risk but Laurie's effort is classy and luscious. It's also perfect Easter fare, even if you saw it last year. It's worth a second look.

Radio choice
Ben Dowell



Dementia: Unexpected Stories of the Mind
Radio 4, 1.45pm

A new series in which the neurologist Jules Montague, *above*, and William Miller (who cared for his father, the polymath Jonathan Miller) visit the homes of people with rare dementia. One of the aims is to clear up misconceptions about the condition, including the idea that it only affects memory. Subjects include a man who hallucinates about cats and rabbits and a novelist who is losing her words. As the symptoms of rare dementias, which often occur in younger people, can be so atypical, those with the disease wait longer for a diagnosis and are often misdiagnosed, we learn.

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Times Radio
Digital, web, smart speaker, app
6.00am Rosie Wright and Rick Kelsey with Times Radio Breakfast **10.00** Carole Walker. Today's headlines and tomorrow's front pages **1.00pm** Hannah MacInnes. Cultured conversation and political interviews **3.00** Fi Glover and Ed Vaizey **5.00** John Pienaar with Times Radio Drive. Analysis of the day's news **7.00** Pienaar and Friends. Informed debate with leading figures **8.00** The Evening Edition with Kait Borsay. Engaging evening conversation **10.00** Henry Bonsu **1.00am** Stories of Our Times **1.30** Red Box **2.00** Highlights from Times Radio

Radio 2
FM: 88-90.2 MHz
6.30am The Nicki Chapman Breakfast Show **9.30** Gary Davies. Stereophonics' Kelly Jones chooses his Tracks of My Years **12.00** Tony Blackburn, Your Soul Mate **2.00pm** Richie Anderson **4.00** Your Ultimate Queen Songs. With Steve Wright **7.00** Queen: The Fans' Story. A love letter to the legendary band from some of the biggest stars of the last 50 years **8.00** Queen at the BBC. A compilation of the rock band's best BBC sessions and archive interviews with band members (r) **9.00** The Blues Show with Cerys Matthews. A selection of music from the blues scene **10.00** Trevor Nelson's Magnificent 7. Seven of Rhythm Nation's biggest hits, uplifting tunes and essential throwbacks **10.30** Trevor Nelson's Rhythm Nation. The DJ introduces a mix of R'n'B and soulful tunes **12.00** OJ Borg **2.30am** One Hit Wonders with OJ Borg **3.00** Pick of the Pops (r) **4.00** Owain Wyn Evans

Radio 3
FM: 90.2-92.4 MHz
6.30am Breakfast
Petroc Trelawny presents Radio 3's classical breakfast show. Including **7.00**, **8.00** News. **7.30**, **8.30** News headlines
9.00 Essential Classics
Hannah French presents music and features, featuring new discoveries, musical surprises and plenty of familiar favourites
12.00 Composer of the Week: Sullivan (1842-1900)
Donald Macleod surveys the life and music of Arthur Sullivan, beginning by looking at his early musical inspirations and training. Sullivan (*HMS Pinafore* — Overture; *HMS Pinafore — When I Was a Lad*; *O Israel*; *Ich möchte hinaus es jauchzen*; Overture — *In Memorium*; and String Quartet in D minor)
1.00pm Live Radio 3 Lunchtime Concert
Andrew McGregor presents a recital from London's Wigmore Hall by the Finnish string quartet Meta4. Purcell (Fantasia a4 No 7 in C minor, Z738); Amy Beach (String Quartet, Op 89); Barber (String Quartet, Op 11 — Molto adagio); Krishna Nagaraja (*Stringar*)
2.00 Afternoon Concert
The Lucerne Festival Orchestra performs Dvorák's *New World* Symphony with the conductor Jakub Hrusa, the BBC Philharmonic plays Stravinsky's *Funeral Song*, and there is the overture to Smyth's *The Wreckers* from the Ulster Orchestra. Plus, every day this week there is Latin American music from the guitarist Yamandu Costa and the accordionist Vincent Peirani, and there are performances from the Freiburg Baroque Orchestra, the pianist Elisso Virsaladze and the Leipzig Cantorey. Including: Mozart Camargo Guarnieri (*Brazilian Dance*, 3 Dances for orchestra); Yamandu Costa (*Samba por Rafa*); Smyth (Overture, *The Wreckers*); Mozart (Fantasia in C minor, K 396); Vejvanovsky (*Baletto per Carnuale*); Stravinsky (*Funeral Song*); Dvorák (Symphony No 9 in E minor, Op 95, *From the New World*); Piazzolla (*Seul te seul*); Schein (*Unser Leben währet siebnzig Jahr*); and Ravel (*Pavane pour une infante défunte*)
4.30 New Generation Artists
With María Dueñas (violin), and Ryan Corbett (accordion). Julian Gargiulo (Violin Sonata No 4, movt 3 *The Earth*); and Bach (English Suite No 2 in A minor, BWV 807)
5.00 In Tune
Music and arts news
7.00 Classical Mixtape
A selection of classical favourites
7.30 Radio 3 in Concert
Alain Altinoglu conducts the Frankfurt Radio Symphony Orchestra in early works by Shostakovich, with Hilary Hahn joining them for Prokofiev's First Violin Concerto. Shostakovich (Scherzo Op 1; and Symphony No 1, Op 10); and Prokofiev (Violin Concerto No 1 in D, Op 19). Interval music — Linda Nicholson plays Lodovico Giustini (Sonata No 1 in G minor, Op 1'1)
9.00 Ultimate Calm
The composer and pianist Olafur Arnalds shares more music to soothe the soul
10.00 Music Matters
Tom Service explores classical music's place in British society (r)
10.45 The Essay: New Generation Thinkers 2022
The 17th-century composer Thomas Weelkes
11.00 Night Tracks
12.30am Through the Night (r)

Radio 4
FM: 92.4-94.6 MHz LW: 198kHz MW: 720 kHz
5.30am News Briefing
5.43 Prayer for the Day
5.45 Farming Today
5.58 Tweet of the Day (r)
6.00 Today
With Mishal Husain and Justin Webb
9.00 Start the Week
Ai Weiwei's new exhibition in London
9.45 (LW) Daily Service
9.45 Book of the Week: Red Memory
By Tania Branigan (1/5)
10.00 Woman's Hour
Magazine show offering a female perspective
11.00 Playing with Fire
Barnie Choudhury investigates the politics of division being imported into the UK (r)
11.30 Lady Killers with Lucy Worsley
The case of a tavern owner accused of murdering a customer (4/10)
12.01pm (LW) Shipping Forecast
12.04 You and Yours
1.00 The World at One
1.45 Dementia: Unexpected Stories of the Mind
Meeting a man with frontotemporal dementia (1/5) ***See Radio Choice***
2.00 The Archers (r)
2.15 This Cultural Life
John Wilson talks to Martin Parr (2/12) (r)
3.00 Round Britain Quiz
Kirsty Lang is in the chair for a new season of the cult cryptic quiz (1/12)
3.30 The Food Programme (r)
4.00 The Invention of Russia
A look at how little Moscow expanded into the biggest country in the world (2/4) (r)
4.30 Beyond Belief
Aleem Maqbool speaks to a vicar who suffered with addiction
5.00 PM
5.54 (LW) Shipping Forecast
6.00 Six O'Clock News
6.30 Just a Minute
With Paul Merton, Shaparak Khorsandi, Daliso Chaponda and Heidi Regan (2/8)
7.00 The Archers
The walls close in on George
7.15 Front Row
Arts programme
8.00 No Need to Say Goodbye
Axel Kacoutié tries to navigate the landscape of loss, considering how losing relationships with close friends or mentors can be as devastating as a romantic break-up
8.30 Crossing Continents
Chris Bowlby reports on public housing in Vienna, where rents are affordable (1/7) (r)
9.00 Science Stories
Philip Ball tells the tale of the French surgeon Alexis Carrel (5/5) (r)
9.30 Start the Week (r)
10.00 The World Tonight
With James Coomarasamy
10.45 Book at Bedtime: Magpie
By Elizabeth Day (6/10)
11.00 Word of Mouth
Michael Rosen is joined by Andy West to discuss philosophy in prisons (1/6) (r)
11.30 Angst!
The first of five stories exploring personal crises, *Actors* by Martin Jameson (1/5) (r)
12.00 News and Weather
12.30am Book of the Week: Red Memory (r)
12.48 Shipping Forecast
1.00 As BBC World Service

Radio 4 Extra
Digital only
8.00am Round the Horne **8.30** Legal, Decent, Honest and Truthful **9.00** We've Been Here Before **9.30** Ring Around the Bath **10.00** Wild Honey **11.00** Murder in Mesopotamia **11.30** Sherlock Holmes with Carleton Hobbs **12.00** Jane Eyre **12.15pm** Curious Under the Stars **12.30** Lobby Land **1.00** Round the Horne **1.30** Legal, Decent, Honest and Truthful **2.00** We've Been Here Before **2.30** Ring Around the Bath **3.00** Wild Honey **4.00** Murder in Mesopotamia **4.30** Sherlock Holmes with Carleton Hobbs **5.00** Jane Eyre **5.15** Curious Under the Stars **5.30** Lobby Land **6.00** Round the Horne **6.30** Legal, Decent, Honest and Truthful **7.00** We've Been Here Before **7.30** Ring Around the Bath **8.00** Bookclub. Ian McEwan talks about his bestselling 1997 novel *Enduring Love*. From 2000 **8.30** My Dream Dinner Party. Joan Bakewell imagines a soiree with her heroes, brought back to life **9.00** Mastertapes. Brinsley Forde discusses Aswad's 1981 studio album *New Chapter* **9.30** The Handmaid's Tale. By Margaret Atwood **9.45** The Whisperer in Darkness. By Julian Simpson **10.00** Comedy Club: Just a Minute. Sue Perkins hosts the comedy panel game **10.30** iGod. Comedy, by Sean Gray **10.45** Hamish and Dougal: You'll Have Had Your Tea. Comedy with Graeme Garden **11.00** The Now Show **11.30** Masala FM. Comedy with Meera Syal. Last in the series

Radio 5 Live
MW: 693, 909
5.00am The Big Green Money Show **6.00** 5 Live Breakfast **9.00** Nicky Campbell **11.00** Naga Munchetty **1.00pm** Nihal Arthanayake **2.30** 5 Live Sport **5.15** 5 Live Drive **7.00** 5 Live Sport **9.00** 5 Live Sport **10.00** Colin Murray **1.00am** Dotun Adebayo

talkSPORT
MW: 1053, 1089 kHz
5.00am Early Breakfast **6.00** Breakfast with Laura Woods **10.00** Jim White and Simon Jordan **1.00pm** GameDay Live **5.00** Drive with Andy Goldstein and Darren Bent **7.00** Kick Off: Burnley v Sheffield United (Kick-off **8.00**). Commentary on the Championship match at Turf Moor **10.00** Sports Bar **1.00am** Extra Time

TalkRadio
Digital only
5.00am James Max **6.30** Peter Cardwell **10.00** Kevin O'Sullivan **1.00pm** Ian Collins **4.00** Petrie Hosken **7.00** Jeremy Kyle **8.00** Piers Morgan Uncensored **9.00** The Talk **10.00** Tom Newton Dunn **11.00** Late Night Show **1.00am** Paul Ross

6 Music
Digital only
5.00am Emily Pilbeam **7.30** Lauren Laverne **10.30** Nemone **1.00pm** Chris Hawkins **4.00** Huw Stephens **7.00** Marc Riley **9.00** Gideon Coe **12.00** In Their Own Words: David Bowie **1.00am** Bowie at the Beeb **2.00** David Bowie Live **3.00** David Bowie Star Special **4.00** The David Bowie Playlist

Virgin Radio
Digital only
6.30am Tom Allen on the Chris Evans Breakfast Show. Tom Allen sits in for Chris Evans **10.00** Steve Denyer **2.00pm** Tim Cocker **6.00** Bam **10.00** Amy Voce **1.00am** Alex Milsom **4.00** Steve Denyer

Classic FM
FM: 100-102 MHz
6.00am More Music Breakfast **9.00** The Classic FM Hall of Fame 2023 with Aled Jones. Classic FM counts down the world's biggest poll of classical music tastes **12.00** The Classic FM Hall of Fame 2023 with Anne-Marie Minhall **3.00pm** The Classic FM Hall of Fame 2023 with Margherita Taylor **6.00** The Classic FM Hall of Fame 2023 with Alexander Armstrong **9.00** Alexander Armstrong's Hall of Fame Highlights **10.00** Smooth Classics. With Karthi Gnanasegaram **1.00am** Bill Overton **4.00** Early Breakfast

television & radio

Viewing Guide
Ben Dowell

MasterChef
BBC1, 8pm

Top pick

There's a good reason this culinary competition is on series 19. Since it started in 1990 (there was a mid-Noughties hiatus), the format has been fine-tuned with the kind of elegance that gets its head judges John Torode and Gregg Wallace salivating. At heart, it remains a straightforward competition that spends weeks finding the best amateur chef in the land with a series of challenges that test skill, staying power and originality. In this opener, our first batch of hopefuls are tasked with cooking a family favourite — but to *MasterChef* standard. It is a neat way of seeing what they are made of as they put a (hopefully classy) spin on well-honed favourites. It is also one of the chief attractions of this show to those viewers who may fancy themselves as a dab hand in the kitchen: how would our best dishes pass muster, we (or maybe it's just me) wonder? Anyway, there's quite a range on offer. Wolverhampton IT worker Matthew rustles up some ackee and saltfish, which he hopes will bring some Caribbean sunshine into the kitchen. Young accountant Terri from Warwick has a go at a pasta crab velouté with rainbow trout caviar, which is quite some family favourite. And after tasting all nine plates, the judges pick their three favourites, giving those cooks a *MasterChef* apron and immunity from cooking in the next round. The remaining six have to pull out all the stops with the judges now witnessing their every move. For two of them, the dream is over tonight.

Blue Lights
BBC1, 9pm

The Northern Irish drama following the fortunes of various probationary police officers has been winning over audiences with its nifty storytelling and honest, textured portrait of what policing the province is actually like. The writer of this third episode, Fran Harris, handles the shift in tonal registers superbly, mixing truly hideous violence with some of the more light-hearted scenes that occasionally make up a police officer's lot in this part of the world. Tonight, the grim side of the ledger includes a punishment shooting, so you have been warned.

Early

BBC1
6.00am Breakfast **9.15** Morning Live. Gaby Roslin and Gethin Jones host **10.00** The Moment of Proof. A claw hammer containing DNA is the key to cracking a murder **10.30** Animal Park Summer. A hand-reared aardvark is reunited with its family (r) (AD) **11.15** Homes Under the Hammer. Properties in Suffolk, Bedfordshire and Kent (r) (AD) **12.15pm** Bargain Hunt. Charlie Ross presents the show from Oswestry in Shropshire **1.00** BBC News at One; Weather **1.20** BBC Regional News; Weather **1.30** Rip Off Britain. The fraudsters taking out expensive phone contracts and leaving others to foot the bill (r) **2.00** Virtually Home. Kunal Trehan comes up with a new look for a dingy hallway in Surrey (r) **2.45** Escape to the Country. Sonali Shah is in the Welsh Marches with a couple who want to find a new home (r) **3.45** The Bidding Room. Items include a pottery wheel, a transforming tea stand and a set of port hole mirrors **4.30** Unbeatable. Quiz hosted by Jason Manford **5.15** Pointless. Quiz hosted by Alexander Armstrong **6.00** The Boy, the Mole, the Fox and the Horse. Animated adaptation of Charlie Mackesy's illustrated book (r) (AD) **6.30** BBC News at Six; Weather **6.50** BBC Regional News; Weather

BBC2
6.15am Gardeners' World (r) **7.15** The Bidding Room (r) **8.00** Sign Zone: Rick Stein's Cornwall (r) (AD, SL) **8.30** Weatherman Walking: The Welsh Coast (r) (SL) **9.00** BBC News **10.00 FILM: The Lavender Hill Mob (U, 1951)** A bank worker plots to steal £1million. Ealing comedy with Alec Guinness (b/w) **11.20 FILM: Passport to Pimlico (U, 1949)** The residents of a London suburb decide to declare independence from Britain. Ealing comedy with Stanley Holloway (b/w) (AD) **12.45pm** Impossible (r) **1.30** Eggheads (r) **2.00** The Hairy Bikers' Pubs That Built Britain. Reliving London's East End of the 1950s and '60s (r) (AD) **2.30** Beechgrove Repotted (r) **2.45** Amazon: Earth's Great Rivers. The latest discoveries of the Amazon river (r) (AD) **3.45** My Unique B&B. Transforming a 1940s railway goods carriage (r) (AD) **4.15** Charlie Mackesy: The Boy, the Mole, the Fox, the Horse and Me. The author traces the events that shaped his artistic imagination (r) (AD) **5.15** Flog It! Paul Martin visits Capesthorne Hall in Cheshire **6.00** Richard Osman's House of Games. With Kaye Adams, Mark Chapman, Philip Glenister and Thanyia Moore (r) **6.30** B&B by the Sea. Deborah Meaden checks in to a Victorian villa (r)

ITV1
6.00am Good Morning Britain. News, current affairs and lifestyle features **9.00** Lorraine. Entertainment, current affairs and fashion news, as well as showbiz stories and gossip. Presented by Lorraine Kelly **10.00** This Morning. A mix of celebrity chat, lifestyle features, advice and competitions **12.30pm** Loose Women. Interviews and studio discussion from a female perspective **1.45** ITV News; Weather **1.50** Regional News; Weather **2.00 FILM: Johnny English Reborn (PG, 2011)** A bumbling former secret agent is lured out of seclusion to foil an attempt to assassinate the premier of China. Spy comedy sequel starring Rowan Atkinson and Gillian Anderson (AD) **4.00** Lingo. Sisters from London, keen quizzers, a father and son from Carrickfergus in Northern Ireland, and a Shropshire couple take part (r) **5.00** Tipping Point. Ben Shephard hosts the arcade-themed quiz in which contestants drop tokens down a choice of four chutes in the hope of winning a £10,000 jackpot (r) **6.00** Regional News; Weather **6.10** ITV News; Weather **6.30** The Chase. Bradley Walsh presents as contestants answer general knowledge questions and work as a team to take on one of the Chasers and secure a cash prize (r)

Channel 4
6.35am Cheers (r) **7.25** The King of Queens (r) (AD) **8.45** Frasier (r) (AD) **10.15** Emergency Helicopter Medics. In County Durham, heli-medics struggle to free a man trapped in his mangled car (r) (AD) **11.15 FILM: Guys and Dolls (PG, 1955)** A gambler tries to win the heart of a Salvation Army member, while his friend aims to hold an illegal dice game. Musical with Frank Sinatra and Marlon Brando. *See Viewing Guide* **2.10pm** Countdown. Grace Dent is in Dictionary Corner **3.00** A Place in the Sun. A pair seek a bolthole on Portugal's western Algarve (r) **4.00** A New Life in the Sun. A family take over a bar in the Costa del Sol (r) **5.00** Four in a Bed. The competition kicks off at Brook Meadow, near Market Harborough in Leicestershire (r) **5.30** Strangers on a Plane. This week's contestants touch down in Porto, Portugal. A Coventry nurse is the first to host, taking her guests surfing on an unusually calm Atlantic coastline **6.00** The Simpsons. Marge protests about television violence, convinced The Itchy & Scratchy Show is turning Maggie into a thug (r) (AD) **6.30** Hollyoaks. The Osbourne family receive some fantastic news, but not everyone is in the mood for celebrating (r) (AD)

Channel 5
6.00am Milkshake! **9.15** Jeremy Vine. The broadcaster and guests discuss the issues of the day **12.45pm** Dogs Behaving (Very) Badly. Graeme Hall helps identical twins who have been inseparable all their lives, but are now struggling because one sister's Labrador cross is always bullying the other's rescue dog (r) **1.40** 5 News at Lunchtime **1.45** Home and Away. Ava jumps at any chance to be around Theo (r) (AD) **2.15 FILM: Witness to Murder — A Darrow & Darrow Mystery (PG, TVM, 2020)** When Claire Darrow defends a friend of her mother in a case, the identity of the prosecuting attorney causes complications. Thriller starring Kimberly Williams-Paisley **4.00** Bargain-Loving Brits in the Sun. A single mum launches her own bar, the co-owners of a new radio station prepare for their inaugural broadcast and a fitness instructor trials his aqua-aerobics classes (r) **5.00** Inside the Mr Kipling Cake Factory. A behind-the-scenes guide to the factory in Carlton, South Yorkshire, featuring a look back at the company's history (r) **5.55** 5 News Update **6.00** Eggheads. Hop Pole United from Aylesbury take on the regulars (r) **6.30** Eggheads. The Fair City Rollers take on the experts **6.55** 5 News Update



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7PM–11PM

BBC1
7.00 The One Show The first visit of the week to the studio, presented by Alex Jones and Emma Willis

7.30 EastEnders Lily is nervous ahead of her 20 week scan, while Kim begs Howie for forgiveness (AD)

8.00 MasterChef New series. John Torode and Gregg Wallace present the audition round of this year's competition. The nine contestants must each prepare a Family Favourite dish, which John and Gregg will sample in a special tasting room, with no clue which cook prepared which meal. *See Viewing Guide* (AD)

9.00 Blue Lights Grace Ellis investigates the punishment shooting of a young McIntyre drug runner, and her old skills as a social worker help get the evidence she needs to bring charges against the gang. However, she is stalled by a senior colleague. *See Viewing Guide* (3/6) (AD)

10.00 BBC News at Ten

10.20 BBC Regional News and Weather

10.30 Project Icon: The UK's Next Music Star The judges test the contestants' commercial potential in song production with the six singers paired up and challenged to rework and remix their partner's signature track (3/6) (r)

11.15 Charlotte in Sunderland Charlotte and Jake organise their gender reveal party, but nerves set in as Charlotte is behind schedule (5/10) (r)

11.45 Charlotte in Sunderland Charlotte and her mum argue as they get to grips with the diagnosis (6/10) (r)

BBC2
7.00 Between the Covers Sara Cox is joined by Nick Knowles, Sara Barron, Ore Oduba and Helen McGinn (5/6)

7.30 Saving Lives at Sea The volunteers at Lough Ree Lifeboat Station race to the rescue of the last inhabitant of a remote island (/10) (r) (AD)

8.00 Mastermind The fifth semi-final sees questions on the subjects of Fridtjof Nansen, the 4AD record label, Christina Rossetti, and the Jason Bourne films

8.30 University Challenge The quarter-final stage continues

9.00 Secrets of the Chippendales Murders The NYPD investigates multiple leads regarding the murder of Nick De Noia (3/4) (AD)

9.45 Secrets of the Chippendales Murders The FBI teams up with down-and-out actor Ray Colon, who leads federal agents on a manhunt for the man behind Nick De Noia's murder. Last in the series (AD)

10.30 The Graduate (12, 1967) A naive college graduate, hailed as a genius by his overbearing parents, is seduced by the middle-aged wife of his father's business partner — but later falls in love with her daughter. Comedy drama starring Dustin Hoffman, Anne Bancroft and Katharine Ross, with a soundtrack by Simon and Garfunkel

ITV1
7.30 Emmerdale There is an unwelcome guest at Rhona's birthday lunch (AD)

8.00 Coronation Street A mischievous Damon infiltrates Sarah's business meeting, Stephen tries to keep Michael and Rufus apart, and Glenda decides to buy one of Estelle's franchises (AD)

9.00 Agatha Christie's Why Didn't They Ask Evans? Bobby and Frankie are convinced a shocking death thought to be suicide was actually murder, so they hatch a plan to infiltrate Frankie into the home of their prime suspect. Hugh Laurie's adaptation, starring Will Poulter and Lucy Boynton (2/3) (AD)

10.15 ITV News

10.30 Long Lost Family: What Happened Next Revisiting seven of the programme's most extraordinary searchers to discover how their lives have been transformed since finding their missing relatives (r) (AD)

11.30 English Football League Highlights Hugh Woozencroft presents action from the Easter Monday fixtures (r)

Channel 4
7.00 Channel 4 News

7.30 Britain's Most Expensive Houses Behind the scenes with UK Sotheby's luxury estate agents (1/4) (AD)

8.00 Jamie's £1 Wonders Jamie Oliver demonstrates how to take root vegetables to another level. He also shares recipe for a sticky barbecue chicken with chunky potato wedges, cheesy enchiladas with an easy no-cook tomato sauce, and upside-down pineapple cake. Last in the series (AD)

9.00 Tempting Fortune: The Final It is the final leg of the journey, and the group must tackle a chilling night trek before reaching the finish line. A bombshell rule change throws everything up in the air. Last in the series. *See Viewing Guide* (AD)

10.00 Rise and Fall It's the final week and the Grafters tackle another Work Shift to add vital funds to the prize pot

11.05 Send Nudes: Body SOS Vogue Williams meets a man who feels his "man boobs" hold him back from dating, and a bodybuilder who is fed up with her flat chest (7/10) (r)

Channel 5
7.00 Police Interceptors Two officers pursue a speeding driver, who eventually decamps and makes a run for it, while a dog handler goes to the aid of the armed response team (r)

7.55 5 News Update

8.00 Traffic Cops In North Yorkshire, police are out in force on a bank holiday weekend, while a biker takes a tumble down a steep embankment after losing control on a bend, somehow miraculously escaping serious injury

9.00 Motorway Cops: Catching Britain's Speeders On a country road in Cheshire, an inspector attends the scene of a three-vehicle crash, where a trapped driver in a flipped car is struggling to stay conscious (2/10)

10.00 999: Critical Condition A 22-year-old arrives at the emergency department after crashing his motorbike at speed, medical staff fear he may have suffered a life-changing spinal cord injury, and an 80-year-old man is treated after suffering a traumatic accident at home (2/8) (r)

11.05 A&E After Dark A young man is brought in with life-threatening stab wounds, while a patient in a gown thinks it would be a good idea to steal an ambulance (2/10) (r)

Late

BBC1
12.15am Anton & Giovanni's Adventures in Sicily The pair make their way through the centre of the island where they try their hands at pasta-making before heading to the outskirts of Palermo where Giovanni has lined up an overnight stay with beer-brewing monks. Last in the series (r) (AD) **1.20-6.00** BBC News

BBC2
12.20am Gods of Snooker The emergence of Steve Davis (r) **1.20** Sign Zone: Countryfile. Margherita Taylor and Joe Crowley are in Sherwood Forest (r) (SL) **2.15** Dragons' Den. A surgeon-turned-inventor thinks he's solved a universal problem for parents (r) (AD, SL) **3.15-4.00** Make It at Market (15/15) (r) (AD, SL)

ITV1
1.10am Teleshopping 3.00 All Elite Wrestling: Dynamite. Hard-hitting action from the world of All Elite Wrestling — the roster features world-class talent including Jon Moxley, Chris Jericho, Bryan Danielson and Claudio Castagnoli **4.40** Unwind with ITV. Daily escape **5.35-6.00** Eat, Shop, Save. Last in the series (r) (SL)

Channel 4
12.05am Celebrity Hunted (r) (AD, SL) **1.00** Ramsay's Kitchen Nightmares USA (r) (SL) **1.50** Couples Come Dine with Me (r) **2.40** Extraordinary Escapes with Sandi Toksvig (r) (AD, SL) **3.35** Grand Designs (r) (AD, SL) **4.30** George Clarke's Old House, New Home (r) (AD, SL) **5.25** Food Unwrapped (r) **5.50-6.10** Find It, Fix It, Flog It (r)

Channel 5
12.05am Police Interceptors An officer chases after a teenage driver in a stolen car at speeds of more than 100mph (r) **1.00** The LeoVegas Live Casino Show **3.00** Kings of Country Music (r) **4.40** Friends (r) (AD) **5.00** House Doctor (r) (SL) **5.30** Peppa Pig (r) (AD, SL) **5.40** Pip and Posy (r) (SL) **5.45-6.00** Paw Patrol (r) (SL)

Tempting Fortune: The Final
Channel 4, 9pm

The addictive reality show fronted by Paddy McGuinness comes to an end with our 12 strangers firmly divided into two camps — those who have resisted temptation during their 18-day hike in South Africa and those who have spent money, which has eaten into everyone's £300,000 prize pot. Naturally the behaviour of the sybarites (led by the milkshake guzzler Lani) has prompted loathing from team puritanical (led by the very loud American James). Tonight we see how the spoils are divided. After a daunting night trek …

Succession
Sky Atlantic/Now, 2am/9pm

In last week's action-packed episode we saw Kendall, Shiv and Roman throw a spanner in the works of Logan's deal to sell the company. After a summit in, of all places, a karaoke booth, it looks as if they are all set to hold out for more money, a move Logan insisted would threaten the sale. "You're not serious people," he told them, and it was hard to disagree. This episode is a right-between-the-eyes corker and to say any more might spoil your fun. Let's just say that it features Connor's wedding and a lot more besides.

Flying the Feathered Edge: The Bob Hoover Project
PBS America, 9.35pm

The great American aviator Bob Hoover had a number of friends, fans and admirers, including the actor Harrison Ford, who appears in this 2014 tribute. Hoover died in 2016 so Kim Furst's film is also a fitting obituary for the man who excelled as a Second World War pilot and peacetime air show ace. The title refers to his trademark talent for shutting his engines off and "feathering" his propellers before performing the kind of loops and rolls that might have taxed even Han Solo.

Film Guys and Dolls
Channel 4, 11.15am

Marlon Brando makes his singing debut alongside Frank Sinatra in this adaptation of the musical. As Sky Masterson, Brando's relaxed singing style pays off in charm and his chemistry with Jean Simmons oozes from the screen. (U, 1955)

Sky Max

6.00am Hold the Front Page (r) (AD) **8.00** Harry Potter: Hogwarts Tournament of Houses (r) (AD) **9.00** The 00s: Cinema's Greatest Decade (r) (AD) **10.00** A League of Their Own Road Trip: Southeast Asia (r) (AD) **4.00pm** David Blaine: Beyond Magic (r) (AD) **5.00** David Blaine: Real or Magic? Performing tricks (r) (AD)
6.00 Harry Potter 20th Anniversary: Return to Hogwarts. With Daniel Radcliffe, Rupert Grint, Emma Watson and Chris Columbus (r) (AD)
8.00 NCIS: Los Angeles. Kensi and Fatima are drugged and kidnapped (r)
9.00 A Town Called Malice. Gene and Cindy use their wits to unify warring factions (r)
10.05 Friends: The Reunion. The show's stars reminisce about the comedy (r) (AD)
12.00 The Force: North East. A raid on the house of a suspected dealer leads officers to a drug den (r) **1.00am** The Force: Manchester (r) **2.00** The Flash. Iris is visited by a friend **3.00** Road Wars (r) **4.00** The 00s: Cinema's Greatest Decade (r) (AD) **5.00** Highway Patrol (r)

Sky Atlantic

6.00am Urban Secrets (r) **7.45** Game of Thrones (r) (AD) **9.50** The Last of Us (r)
6.15pm The Last of Us. Ellie crosses paths with a vengeful group of survivors and draws the attention of the leader (r) (AD)
7.20 The Last of Us. Joel and Ellie near the end of their journey, while a flashback reveals a woman placing her trust in a lifelong friend. Pedro Pascal stars (9/9) (r) (AD)
8.20 The Making of The Last of Us. Behind the scenes of post-apocalyptic drama (r) (AD)
9.00 Succession. Drama about a dysfunctional media dynasty starring Brian Cox and Jeremy Strong. *See Viewing Guide* (3/10) (r)
10.15 Drift — Partners in Crime. While Ali hides with Frida in the Alps, Leo tries to uncover the conspirators' identities (5/10) (r)
11.15 Game of Thrones: Best Episodes Ever. The best episodes chosen by fans worldwide (r) (AD)
12.15am Game of Thrones. The Night King and the army of the dead reach Winterfell (r) (AD)
1.45 Billions (r) (AD) **4.00** Urban Secrets (r)

Sky Documentaries

6.00am Fish Town (r) **7.00** Discovering: Orson Welles (r) (AD) **8.00** The Directors (r) **9.00** Deadline Day: Football's Transfer Window (r) (AD) **10.00** First Ladies (r) (AD) **11.00** The Movies (r) (AD) **12.00 FILM: Spitfire (PG, 2018)** The story of British single-seat fighter plane the Supermarine Spitfire **2.00pm FILM: Fashion Reimagined (12, TVM, 2022)** Following fashion designer and environmental activist Amy Powney **4.00** The Directors (r)
5.00 Discovering: Orson Welles (r) (AD)
6.00 Deadline Day: Football's Transfer Window. A look at the transfer market (r) (AD)
7.00 First Ladies (2/6) (r) (AD)
8.00 The Movies (r) (AD)
9.00 FILM: Seve (PG, 2021) The late great master of golf Severiano Ballesteros (AD)
11.00 Marathon: The Patriots Day Bombing (r)
1.00am FILM: Enron — The Smartest Guys in the Room (12, 2005) Documentary (AD)
3.00 FILM: Simple as Water (PG, 2021)
5.00 Discovering: Orson Welles (r) (AD)

Sky Arts

6.00am Arts Uncovered **6.20** LSO: Sir John Eliot Gardiner Conducts Mendelssohn & Schumann **8.00** Battle of the Brass Bands (AD)
9.00 Tales of the Unexpected (AD) **10.00** Alfred Hitchcock Presents **11.00** André Rieu: Dreaming
12.30pm André Rieu: Roses from the South
2.30 André Rieu: Live in Brazil. The violinist's first-ever concert in São Paulo **4.30** André Rieu: Live in Sydney. Dame Edna Everage joins the violinist as he performs in Sydney, Australia
7.30 André Rieu & the Dutch Royal Family. A concert for the investiture of King Willem Alexander and Queen Maxima in 2013
9.30 André Rieu: Happy Days Are Here Again. The Dutch violinist and his Johann Strauss Orchestra perform in Maastricht, featuring feel-good classics, show-tunes and joyous waltzes
12.30am Les Dawson's Parisienne Adventure: Urban Myths **1.00** Joan Rivers and Barbra Streisand: Urban Myths **1.30** Offended by Irvine Welsh (AD) **2.30** Landmark (AD)
3.30 The South Bank Show **4.30** Auction

Sky Main Event

6.00am Sky Sports News **7.00** Good Morning Sports Fans **10.00** The Football Show **11.30** Ref Watch. The Sky Sports team look back over some of the big refereeing decisions **12.00** Live EFL: Huddersfield Town v Blackburn Rovers (Kick-off **12.30**). Coverage of the Championship encounter from John Smith's Stadium **2.30pm** Live EFL: Coventry City v Watford (Kick-off **3.00**). Coverage of the Championship encounter comes from Coventry Building Society Arena **5.00** Live EFL: Bristol City v Middlesbrough (Kick-off **5.30**). Coverage of the Championship encounter comes from Ashton Gate
7.30 Live EFL: Burnley v Sheffield United (Kick-off **8.00**). Coverage of the Championship encounter from Turf Moor. Burnley look to be in a strong position to win the title and return to the Premier League. However, the Blades will also hope to earn automatic promotion
10.30 Back Pages Tonight. A look at the sports headlines in tomorrow's newspapers
11.00 Sky Sports News

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TalkTV

6.00am Jonny Gould **6.30** Peter Cardwell. The Westminster insider scours the latest news from Parliament, featuring exclusive interviews with political heavyweights **10.00** The Independent Republic of Mike Graham. The host looks through the morning newspapers **1.00pm** Ian Collins. Debates and dedicated time for your calls **4.00** Live Petrie Hosken. The host presents the very best and latest news stories
7.00 Plank of the Week. Mike Graham presents the ultimate panel show
8.00 Friday Night with Nadine. The former Cabinet Minister and author presents her take on the latest reports and headlines
9.00 What Just Happened? with Kevin O'Sullivan. Discussion on the latest events
9.30 The Royal Tea. All the opinions, insight and debate of the latest gossip, gripes and goings on of the Royal family
10.00 The Best of the Talk
11.00 Friday Night with Nadine
12.00 Live Petrie Hosken. The latest events
1.00am Plank of the Week **2.00** Live Petrie Hosken **3.00** Friday Night with Nadine **4.00** The Best of the Talk **5.00** James Max

BBC4

7.00pm Great Asian Railway Journeys. Michael Portillo travels from Bangkok to Hua Hin
7.30 Canals: The Making of a Nation. How carving up the landscape in order to build canals helped man's understanding of the earth below
8.00 Digging for Britain. Alice Roberts visits archaeological digs in the north of Britain, including Scotland's oldest railway, and one of the best-preserved Norman castles (3/6)
9.00 Hubble: The Wonders of Space Revealed. The story of how the Hubble space telescope has revealed the awe and wonder of the universe and how daring astronauts have risked their lives to keep it working
10.00 The Sky at Night. An investigation into the latest science used in the hunt for extraterrestrial life, including a major mission to Jupiter's icy moons
10.30 Endgame in Ireland. Contacts between the IRA and the British government (2/4)
11.30 A Pembrokeshire Farm. Griff Rhys Jones faces some last-minute disasters (5/5)
12.00 Vitamin Pills: Miracle or Myth? Whether people really need vitamin and mineral supplements **1.00am-3.55** The Capture

Talking Pictures

6.00am FILM: Three Witnesses (PG, 1935) Crime drama starring Henry Kendall (b/w) **7.20 FILM: Be My Guest (U, 1965)** Drama with David Hemmings **9.00** Look at Life **9.10 FILM: West of Zanzibar (U, 1954)** Jungle adventure starring Anthony Steel (b/w) **11.00 FILM: Railroaded (PG, 1947)** Thriller starring John Ireland (b/w) **12.30pm FILM: The Sandwich Man (U, 1966)** Comedy starring Michael Bentine **2.30** Crown Court **3.00 FILM: The Man from Snowy River (PG, 1982)** Australian Western starring Kirk Douglas
5.05 The Rogues (b/w)
6.00 The Footage Detectives
7.00 The Champions
8.00 The Main Chance
9.00 FILM: Bear Island (PG, 1979) Thriller with Donald Sutherland and Vanessa Redgrave
11.20 Secret Army. The safe house is found
12.25am Crown Court **1.55 FILM: The Cheap Detective (PG, 1978)** Detective spoof starring Peter Falk and Dom DeLuise **3.45 FILM: Big Boy Rides Again (PG, 1935)** Mystery Western starring Guinn "Big Boy' Williams (b/w) **4.50** The Edgar Wallace Mystery Theatre

Film4

11.00am Kung Fu Panda (PG, 2008) Animated comedy with the voice of Jack Black (AD) **12.45pm Lemony Snicket's A Series of Unfortunate Events (PG, 2004)** Comedy adventure starring Jim Carrey (AD) **2.50 Jumanji (PG, 1995)** Fantasy adventure with Robin Williams **4.55 Zathura: A Space Adventure (PG, 2005)** Family sci-fi adventure starring Josh Hutcherson and Jonah Bobo (AD)
6.55 Pacific Rim: Uprising (12, 2018) The son of a war hero leads a new generation of giant robot pilots against a wave of alien Kaiju creatures. Sci-fi sequel starring John Boyega, Scott Eastwood and Cailee Spaeny (AD)
9.00 Peppermint (15, 2018) LA banker Riley sets out on a one-woman vengeance mission after her husband and daughter are killed. Revenge thriller starring Jennifer Garner
11.05 Colombiana (15, 2011) An orphan grows up to be an assassin while secretly plotting revenge on the gangsters who murdered her parents. Action thriller starring Zoe Saldana, Cliff Curtis, Michael Vartan and Lennie James
1.15am-3.35 Brother (18, 2000) Crime thriller starring Takeshi Kitano

More4

8.55am Kirstie's House of Craft **9.15** A Place in the Sun: Home or Away **10.05** A New Life in the Sun **11.05** Find It, Fix It, Flog It
1.10pm Heir Hunters **2.10** Four in a Bed
4.50 Kirstie and Phil's Love It or List It (AD)
6.55 Escape to the Château: DIY (AD)
7.55 Grand Designs. A couple plan to build a new family home in rural East Sussex almost entirely out of concrete (6/7) (AD)
9.00 Britain's Most Luxurious Train Journeys. New series. A guide to luxury train rides across Britain, beginning with the steam-hauled Saphos train on the Devonshire coast, where a special anniversary is being planned (1/4) (AD)
10.00 The Secret World of Chocolate. Dawn French narrates a look at rivalries between chocolate manufacturers, revealing the lengths companies went to in a bid to make their product the nation's favourite (1/3) (AD)
11.05 24 Hours in A&E. A woman who was involved in a car crash with her husband (AD)
12.10am Britain's Most Luxurious Train Journeys (AD) **1.15** 8 Out of 10 Cats Does Countdown **2.20** 24 Hours in A&E (AD)
3.25-3.50 Food Unwrapped (AD)

ITV2

6.00am World's Funniest Videos **6.35** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records **7.00** Secret Crush (SL) **8.00** Dress to Impress **9.00** Celebrity Supermarket Sweep (AD) **10.00** In for a Penny (AD) **10.30 FILM: Ella Enchanted (PG, 2004)** Fantasy adventure with Anne Hathaway (AD) **12.25pm** Family Fortunes **1.30** Celebrity Catchphrase (AD) **2.30 FILM: E.T. — The Extra-Terrestrial (U, 1982)** Sci-fi fantasy starring Henry Thomas (AD) **4.50 FILM: The Secret Life of Pets (U, 2016)** Animated adventure featuring the voice of Louis CK (AD)
6.35 FILM: Jurassic World — Fallen Kingdom (12, 2018) Action sequel starring Chris Pratt and Bryce Dallas Howard (AD)
9.00 Family Guy (AD)
9.30 Family Guy (AD)
10.00 Family Guy (AD)
10.25 Family Guy (AD)
10.55 Family Guy (AD)
11.25 American Dad! (AD) **12.25am** Bob's Burgers (AD) **1.20** Don't Hate the Playaz **2.05** Totally Bonkers Guinness World Records
2.40 Unwind with ITV **3.00** Teleshopping

ITV3

6.00am Never the Twain **6.35** Midsomer Murders (AD) **8.35** Never the Twain **9.35** Where the Heart Is (AD) **11.40** Agatha Christie's Poirot (AD) **12.50pm FILM: Carry On Dick (PG, 1974)** Comedy starring Sid James (AD) **2.35 FILM: Carry On Again Doctor (PG, 1969)** Comedy starring Sid James (AD) **4.15 FILM: Carry On Up the Jungle (PG, 1970)** Comedy starring Sid James and Frankie Howerd (AD)
6.00 Downton Abbey. Rose's contribution to Robert's birthday party ruffles feathers (AD)
7.00 Heartbeat. Greengrass annoys Blaketon by fixing a golf tournament (AD)
8.00 McDonald & Dodds. The detectives investigate the death of a rugby player. Jason Watkins and Tala Gouveia star (2/3) (AD)
10.00 Blue Murder. A popular vet is found murdered. Sylvia Syms guest stars (3/6) (AD)
11.05 Wycliffe. A magistrate acquaintance of Wycliffe is found hanged (7/8)
12.10am FILM: The Booze Cruise III — The Scattering (12, TVM, 2006) Final part of the comedy trilogy starring Neil Pearson (AD)
2.20 Unwind with ITV **2.30** Teleshopping

ITV4

6.00am Great Racehorses **6.25** The Protectors **6.55** Cadfael **8.35** The Professionals (AD) **9.40** Dempsey and Makepeace (AD) **10.40 FILM: A Bridge Too Far (PG, 1977)** Fact-based Second World War drama with Dirk Bogarde **2.15pm** Live ITV Racing: Irish Grand National. Coverage from Fairyhouse and Kempton Park **5.30 FILM: Moonraker (PG, 1979)** The search for a space shuttle uncovers a genocide plot. James Bond spy adventure starring Roger Moore (AD)
8.00 The Chase Celebrity Special. Bradley Walsh presents, with Chizzy Akudolu, Andrew Pierce, Sonja McLaughlan and Jack Carroll
9.00 English Football League Highlights. Action from the Easter Monday fixtures, including Burnley v Sheffield United at Turf Moor and Huddersfield Town v Blackburn Rovers at John Smith's Stadium in the Championship
11.00 FILM: The Wolf of Wall Street (18, 2013) A New York stockbroker lives a life of debauchery as he gets rich through illegal trading. Martin Scorsese's fact-based drama starring Leonardo DiCaprio and Jonah Hill (AD)
2.40am Unwind with ITV **3.00** Teleshopping

Drama

6.00am Teleshopping **7.00** Birds of a Feather **9.15** Classic Holby City **10.35** Casualty **11.40** The Bill **12.40pm** Classic EastEnders **2.00** Father Brown. Four episodes of the drama (AD)
6.00 Father Brown. A gossip columnist is killed after threatening to expose secrets (AD)
7.00 Father Brown. Father Brown joins forces with Chief Inspector Valentine to uncover a dark secret at Helmsley House (AD)
8.00 The Inspector Lynley Mysteries. A young lawyer is found axed to death in Hyde Park, and Lynley and Havers are led to the chambers of a human rights barrister who had an affair with the victim. Stars Nathaniel Parker (3/4)
10.00 New Tricks. The team reopens the four-year-old case of a murdered street artist when graffiti by a person claiming to be the killer appears around London (5/10) (AD)
11.20 Cutting It. The academy is plunged into chaos by disruptive students only weeks into the new term, forcing Allie to rely more and more on Melissa to keep things in order (2/6)
12.40am Bad Girls **1.45** Lovejoy **2.35** Classic Holby City (SL) **4.00** Teleshopping

Yesterday

6.10am Chris Tarrant: Extreme Railways (AD)
7.10 Monster Ships **8.00** Abandoned Engineering (AD) **9.00** War Factories **10.00** The World at War **11.00** Anthony Bourdain: Parts Unknown **12.00** Great British Railway Journeys
2.00pm Bangers and Cash (AD) **4.00** War Factories **5.00** The World at War
6.00 Great British Railway Journeys
6.30 Great British Railway Journeys
7.00 Anthony Bourdain: Parts Unknown. Exploring the history and cuisine of Libya (6/8)
8.00 Great British Landmark Fixers. A team restore the Manchester Town Hall (5/6)
9.00 The Architecture the Railways Built. Tim Dunn explores railway ingenuity at Goole swing bridge and takes in Edinburgh Waverley from roof to underground vaults (6/10) (AD)
10.00 Bangers and Cash. A 1967 Aston Martin DB6 is sold at the auction (AD)
11.00 Abandoned Engineering. A cliff-top ruin and an extraordinarily tall tower (5/8) (AD)
12.00 Great British Railway Journeys **1.00am** Chris Tarrant: Extreme Railways (AD) **2.00** Monster Ships **3.00** Teleshopping

Variations

BBC1 N Ireland
As BBC1 except: 10.30pm Murder in Paradise **11.00** The Secret Peacemaker. Documentary about Father Alec Reid **12.25am** Project Icon: The UK's Next Music Star **1.10-6.00** BBC News

BBC1 Scotland
As BBC1 except: 6.00pm-6.30 Grand Tours of Scotland's Rivers **10.30** Facelift. Construction is under way at the hospital (r) **11.30** Project Icon: The UK's Next Music Star. The judges test the contestants' commercial potential in song production (r) **12.15am** Charlotte in Sunderland. Jake must entertain the guests (r) **12.45-1.15** Charlotte in Sunderland (r)

BBC1 Wales
As BBC1 except: 7.00pm-7.30 Iolo's Borderlands. Iolo Williams explores the borderlands of Radnorshire

BBC2 N Ireland
As BBC2 except: 7.30pm-8.00 Farm to Feast: Best Menu Wins (r) **10.35** Tréigthe (r) **11.05** Keepin' 'Er Country: On the Road Again (r) **11.35-1.20am** FILM: The Graduate (1967) Comedy drama starring Dustin Hoffman

BBC2 Wales
As BBC2 except: 2.30pm Amazon: Earth's Great Rivers (r) (AD) **3.30** My Unique B&B (r) (AD) **4.00** Charlie Mackesy: The Boy, the Mole, the Fox, the Horse and Me (r) (AD) **5.00-6.00** Your Home Made Perfect (r) **7.00** The One Show **7.30-8.00** Between the Covers

STV
As ITV1 except: 4.40am-5.35 Night Vision

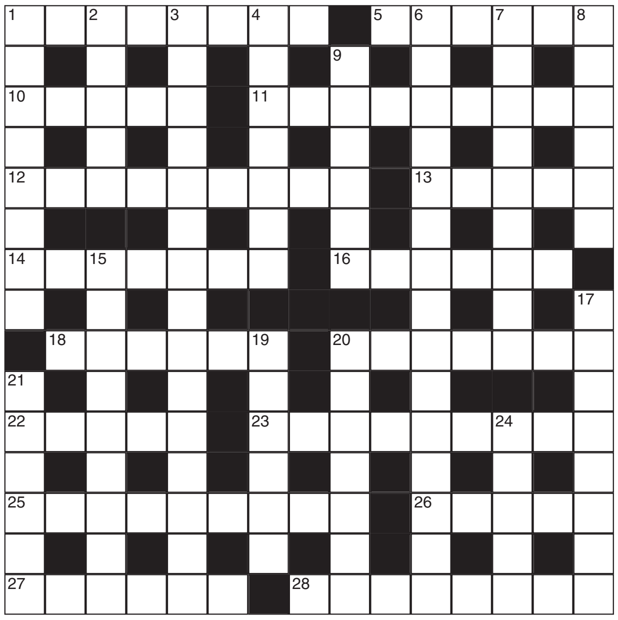
BBC Scotland
2.00pm Sign Zone: Beechgrove Garden (r) **2.30** Sign Zone: Landward (r) **3.00-4.00** Sign Zone: Getting Hitched Asian Style (r) (AD) **7.00** The Seven **7.30** Landward (r) **8.00** Born to Be Wild (r) **8.30** Scottish Vets Down Under (r) (AD) **9.00** Meet You at the Hippos (r) (AD) **10.00** Designing the Hebrides (AD) **10.30** Growing Up Scottish (r) **11.00** Style Fixers (r) (AD) **11.30-12.00** Dubai Hustle (r)

BBC Alba
6.00am Alba Today **5.00pm** Treubh an Tuathanais (Big Barn Farm) (r) **5.15** Su Pic (Peek Zoo) (r) **5.20** AH-AH/No-No **5.30** Pip & Posy **5.40** Meaban is Moo **5.45** Piseag & Cuilean/Kit & Pup (r) **5.50** Stòiridh (r) **6.00** Port Pàipeir (r) **6.10** A' Chuil (r) **6.15** Geamaichean Gorach (r) **6.20** Damhan & Durrag/Pipas & Douglas (r) **6.25** Uaine (r) **6.30** Alba Eagalach (r) **6.35** Na Dana-thursan aig Tintin/The Adventures of Tintin (r) **7.00** Dealbhan Fraoich (Heather's Portraits) (r) **7.30** SpeakGaelic (r) **8.00** An Là (News) **8.15** Binneas — Na Trads **8.30** Fillte (r) **9.00** Trusadh (Compelling Stories) **10.00** Under Canvas 2021/22 (r) **10.30** Cold War Hockey (r) **11.30** Seòid a' Chidsin — The Kitchen Coves (r) **12.00-6.00am** Alba Today

S4C
6.00am Cyw: Shwshaswyn (r) **6.10** Nico Nôg (r) **6.20** Digbi Draig (r) **6.30** Sam Tân (r) **6.40** Ahoi! **7.00** Abadas (r) **7.15** Ein Byd Bach Ni (r) **7.25** Y Crads Bach (r) **7.30** Sion y Chef (r) **7.45** Fferm Fach (r) **8.00** Bing (r) **8.10** Yr Ysgol (r) **8.25** Octonots (r) **8.35** Anifeiliaid Bach y Byd (r) **8.45** Cei Bach (r) **9.00** Caru Canu (r) **9.05** Sbarc (r) **9.20** Sigldigwt (r) **9.35** Guto Gwningen (r) **10.00** Shwshaswyn (r) **10.10** Nico Nôg (r) **10.20** Digbi Draig (r) **10.30** Sam Tân (r) **10.40** Ahoi! (r) **11.00** Abadas (r) **11.15** Ein Byd Bach Ni (r) **11.25** Y Crads Bach (r) **11.30** Sion y Chef (r) **11.45** Fferm Fach (r) **12.00** Cwpwrdd Epic Chris (r) **12.25pm** Heno (r) **1.10** Yn y Fan a'r Lle (r) (AD) **1.35** Sain Ffagan (r) (AD) **2.00** News; Weather **2.05** Prynhawn Da **3.00** News; Weather **3.05** Ffit Cymru (r) **4.00** Awr Fawr: Bing (r) **4.10** Octonots (r) **4.25** Ein Byd Bach Ni (r) **4.35** Anifeiliaid Bach y Byd (r) **4.45** Fferm Fach (r) **5.00** Stwnsh: Dreigiau — Marchogion Berc (r) **5.20** Wariars (r) **5.30** Efaciwîs (r) **5.55** Larfa (r) **6.00** Bad Achub Porthdinllaen (r) (AD) **6.30** Rownd a Rownd (r) (AD) **6.57** News **7.00** Heno **7.45** News; Weather **8.00** Bwrdd i Dri (r) **8.25** Garddio a Mwy **8.55** News; Weather **9.00** Ffermio **9.30** Sgorio **10.00** Cynefin (r) **11.00-11.35** Sopranos: Y Pasg (r)

MindGames

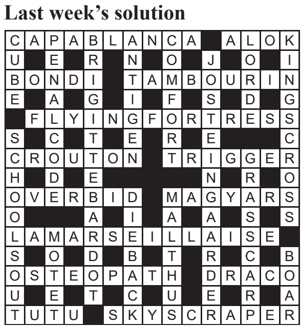
General Knowledge Crossword No 176



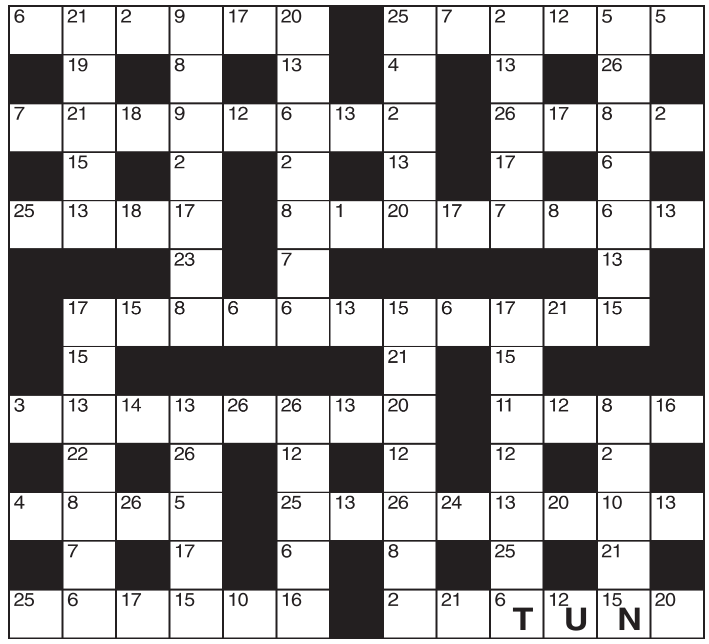
Across
1 Angular distance from the equator (8)
5 Implement for trimming hedges or grass (6)
10 English mathematician who developed a form of algebra for use in logic (5)
11 Ubiquitous plastic used for packaging (9)
12 Day before All Saints' Day (9)
13 South Asian drink made with yoghurt or buttermilk (5)
14 Singer who has had 13 UK No 1 hits, a record for a female vocalist (7)
16 Greeting that means "peace" in Hebrew (6)
18 Downbeat resident of the Hundred Acre Wood (6)
20 Dog bred to indicate the location of shot game (7)
22 --- salts, hydrated magnesium sulphate used medicinally (5)
23 Largest of the British Crown dependencies by area (4,2,3)
25 Musician who released the classic album *Graceland* (4,5)
26 Pacific island nation, the smallest sovereign state outside Europe (5)
27 Home of the mythical voyager Odysseus (6)
28 Language from which "futon" and "tycoon" are borrowed (8)

Down
1 Puccini opera about a down-at-heel group of artistes (2,6)
2 Online bully or provocateur (5)
3 1965 film including the songs *Maria* and *Edelweiss* (3,5,2,5)
4 Insect order including flies (7)
6 Eagles hit that ends: "You can check out any time you like, but you can never leave" (5,10)
7 Lionesses footballer, now a BBC sports presenter (4,5)
8 --- Smith, poet who penned *Not Waving But Drowning* (6)
9 --- Kinnock, Welsh MEP in post from 1994 to 2009 (6)
15 US region including the states of Alabama and Georgia (4,5)
17 Wellington's nickname (4,4)
19 Wartime encrypting machine cracked at Bletchley Park (6)
20 Italian maize flour (7)
21 Ancient site of the oracle at the temple of Apollo (6)
24 Pale purple colour named after the mallow flower (5)

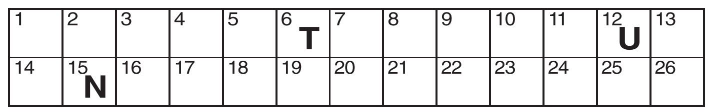
Last week's solution



Codeword No 4871



A B C D E F G H I J K L M ~~N~~ O P Q R S ~~T~~ ~~U~~ V W X Y Z

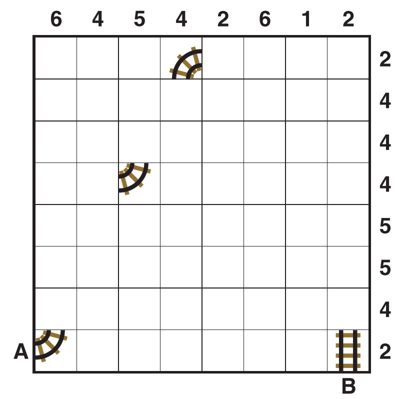


Every letter in this crossword-style grid has been substituted for a number from 1 to 26. Each letter of the alphabet appears in the grid at least once. Use the letters already provided to work out the identity of further letters. Enter letters in the main grid and the smaller reference grid until all 26 letters of the alphabet have been accounted for. Proper nouns are excluded. *Saturday's solution, right*

Cluelines Stuck on Codeword? To receive 4 random clues call 0901 293 6262 or text TIMECODE to 64343. Calls cost £1 plus your telephone company's network access charge. Texts cost £1 plus your standard network charge. For the full solution call 0905 757 0142. Calls cost £1 per minute plus your telephone company's network access charge. SP: Spoke, 0333 202 3390 (Mon-Fri, 9am-5.30pm).

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Train Tracks No 1909



Lay tracks to enable the train to travel from village A to village B. The numbers indicate how many sections of rail go in each row and column. There are only straight rails and curved rails. The track cannot cross itself.

Quintagram®

Solve all five **cryptic** clues using each letter underneath once only

1 Talk about European rule-breaker (5)
_ _ _ _ _

2 Burn Mike's amulet (5)
_ _ _ _ _

3 Dance wildly holding large source of light (6)
_ _ _ _ _ _

4 The French prohibit working for Middle-Eastern country (7)
_ _ _ _ _ _ _

5 Hopeless situation left Sea Scout reeling (4,5)
_ _ _ _ _ _ _ _ _

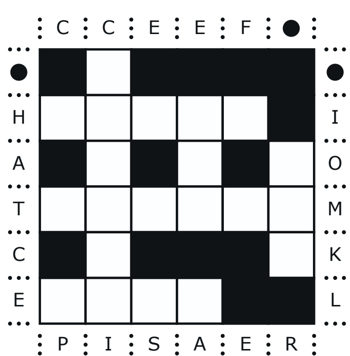
A	A	A	A	A	B	C	C
C	C	D	E	E	E	E	H
H	L	L	L	M	N	N	N
O	O	R	S	S	T	T	U

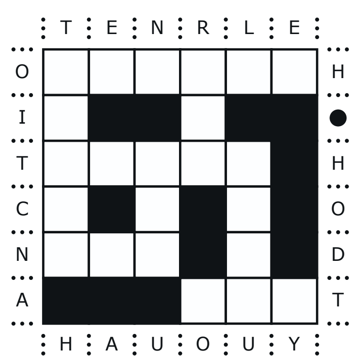
Challenge your mind with puzzle books from The Times



thetimes.co.uk/bookshop

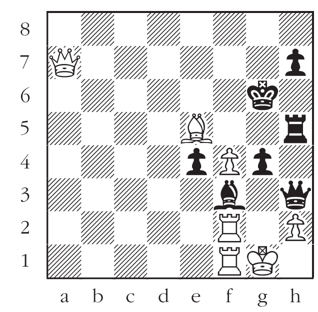
Lexica No 6821 No 6822





Slide the letters either horizontally or vertically back into the grid to produce a completed crossword. Letters are allowed to slide over other letters

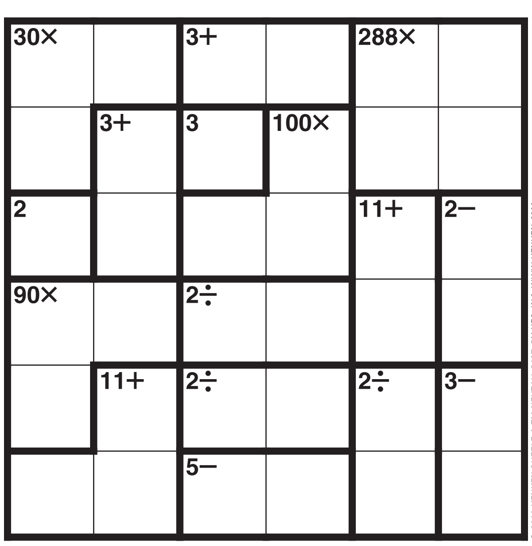
Winning Move



Black to play. This position is from Marcolino-Martin Carmona, Titled Tuesday, chess.com 2023.

Black has a big attack but White is a rook ahead, threatens Qg7+ and seems to have the kingside situation under control. How did Black show this wasn't the case?

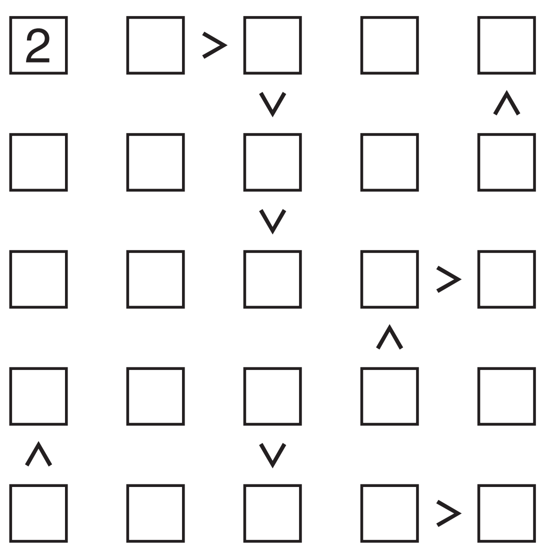
KenKen Easy No 5863



All the digits 1 to 6 must appear in every row and column. In each thick-line "block", the target number in the top left-hand corner is calculated from the digits in all the cells in the block, using the operation indicated by the symbol.

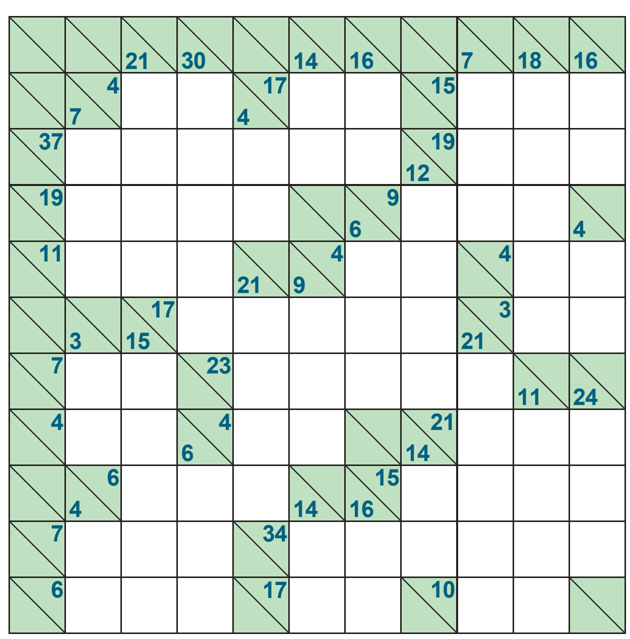
© 2010 KENKEN PUZZLE & TM NEXTOY. DIST. BY UFS, INC. WWW.KENKEN.COM

Futoshiki No 4451



Fill the blank squares so that every row and column contains each of the numbers 1 to 5 once only. The symbols between the squares indicate whether a number is larger (>) or smaller (<) than the number next to it.

Kakuro No 3410

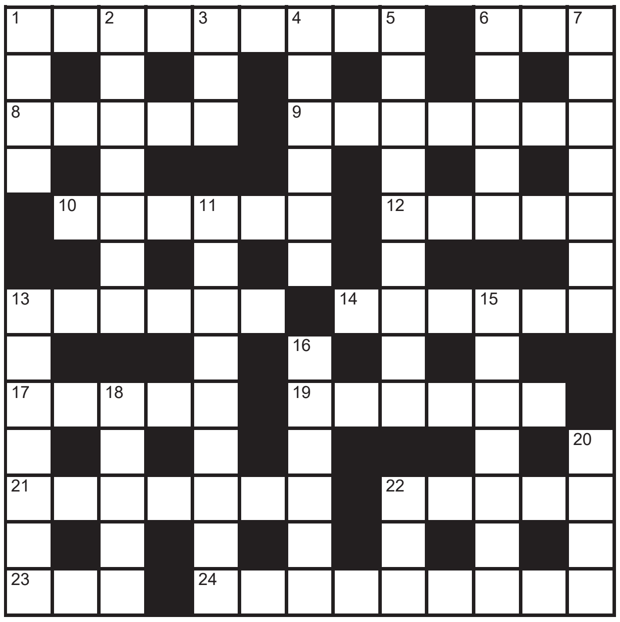


Fill the grid using the numbers 1 to 9 only. The numbers in each horizontal or vertical run of white squares add up to the total in the triangle to its left or above it. The same number may occur more than once in a row or column, but not within the same run of white squares.

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MindGames

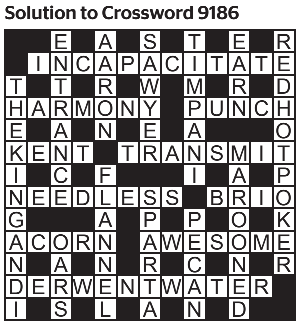
times2 Crossword No 9187



Across
1 Sink (9)
6 Miserable (3)
8 Glossy fabric (5)
9 Leave without permission (7)
10 List of fees (6)
12 Arranged as a one-off (2,3)
13 Lech ---, Polish statesman (6)
14 Jointly decided (6)
17 Assessed (5)
19 Give up (a role) (6)
21 Parody, caricature (7)
22 Composed manner (5)
23 Beam of light (3)
24 *Of Mice and Men* author (9)

Down
1 Thin curl of smoke (4)
2 Begin a sea voyage (3,4)
3 Prohibit (3)
4 Fingal's Cave island (6)
5 Retrospectively wistful (9)
6 Tropical arboreal mammal (5)
7 Inferred by elimination (7)
11 Unseen but harmful (9)
13 Songbird (7)
15 Wind together or around (7)
16 Broad street (6)
18 Midriff, abdomen (5)
20 Summit (4)
22 Play on words (3)

Solution to Crossword 9186



Need help with today's puzzle? Call 0905 757 0143 to check the answers. Calls cost £1 per minute plus your telephone company's network access charge. SP: Spoke, 0333 202 3390 (Mon-Fri 9am-5.30pm).

Bridge Andrew Robson

Graeme Knox from Stirling was rightly happy with his play on today's 6♥ from an online duplicate. You win the opening spade lead. You then cash the ace of hearts (noting West's ten) and lead a second heart, West discarding (a spade). You insert dummy's nine, East winning the queen and returning ...

We're going to consider the play after both a club and a non-club (say a diamond) return.

At the table, East switched to a club. Sensibly unwilling to gamble his slam on the location of the king of clubs when there was a good chance of a fourth diamond trick, declarer rose with the ace. He then cashed his remaining top spade, ruffed a spade, drew East's trumps then, in this ending, crucially led dummy's last heart.

North: ♠ - ♥ 5 (led) ♦ 98 ♣ QJ
West: ♠ - ♥ - ♦ J764 ♣ K
East: ♠ - ♥ - ♦ 52 ♣ 1093
South: ♠ - ♥ - ♦ AKQ10 ♣ 7

Declarer discarded his last club, whereupon West was squeezed in the minors. He had to discard a diamond to retain his king of clubs but declarer could now cross to the ace-king-queen of diamonds felling the jack, and enjoy the ten as this 12th trick. Slam made.

Now, say East switches to a diamond, rather than a club. To bring about the above squeeze on West, you must perform the Vienna Coup. After winning the diamond, you must cash the ace of clubs before playing the remaining top spade, ruffing a spade and running all the trumps. Otherwise West is discarding after declarer.

There's an attractive alternative non-squeeze combination line though. After winning the diamond, playing the top spade, ruffing a spade and drawing trumps, you cross to the two remaining top diamonds, hoping for the jack to drop. When it does not, you ruff the ten of diamonds and run the queen of clubs.

No good — which makes it cleverer for East to return a club when holding the king than when not. andrew.robson@thetimes.co.uk

Dealer: South, Vulnerability: Neither

Pairs

North: ♠ 108 ♥ KJ9752 ♦ 98 ♣ QJ6
West: ♠ Q9652 ♥ 10 ♦ J7643 ♣ K8
East: ♠ J43 ♥ Q864 ♦ 52 ♣ 10932
South: ♠ AK7 ♥ A3 ♦ AKQ10 ♣ A754

S(Knox)	W	N	E
2♣(1)	Pass	2♦(2)	Pass
2NT(3)	Pass	3♦(4)	Pass
3♥(4)	Pass	5♥(5)	Pass
6♥	End		

(1) 23 or more points, or an upgrade for shape.
(2) Negative or waiting, and note how sensible this is (as opposed to responding 2♥). He will soon be able to "right-side" a heart contract via a transfer.
(3) 23-24 balanced.
(4) Transfer to hearts, duly completed.
(5) Slam invitation, guaranteeing a sixth heart (as South may have only two).

Contract: 6♥, Opening Lead: ♠ 5

Brain Trainer

EASY 21	+ 6	x 3	− 7	1/2 OF IT	+ 8	2/3 OF IT	+ 12	x 2	− 9	ANSWER
MEDIUM 110	+1/2 OF IT	x 3	+ 95	30% OF IT	+ 88	40% OF IT	+ 53	x 2	− 97	ANSWER
HARDER 179	x 5	+ 337	+1/2 OF IT	x 3	− 792	7/8 OF IT	− 986	50% OF IT	+ 807	ANSWER

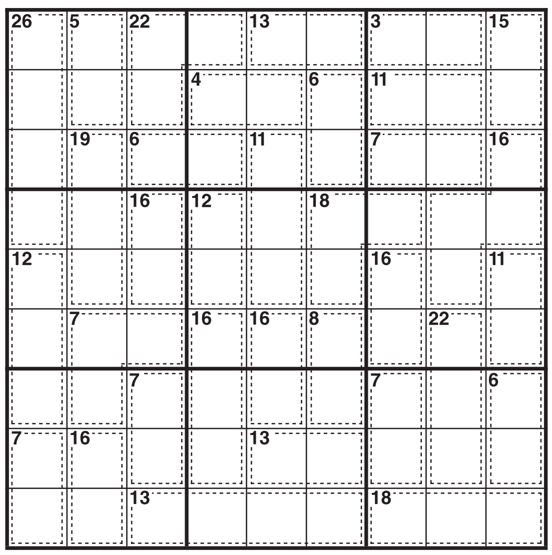
Polygon



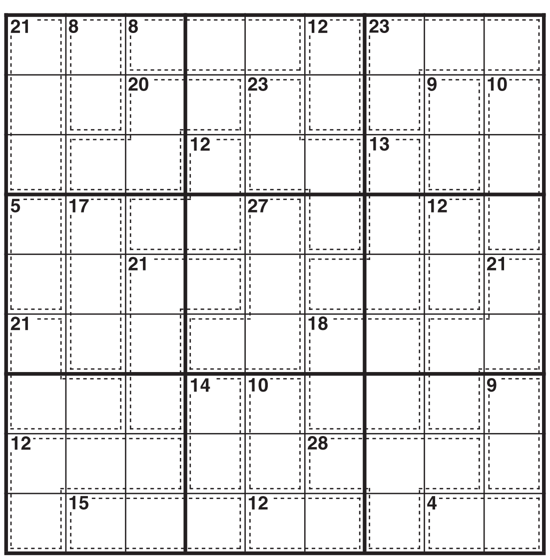
From these letters, make words of **three** or more letters, always including the central letter. Answers must be in the *Concise Oxford Dictionary*, excluding capitalised words, plurals, conjugated verbs (past tense etc), adverbs ending in LY, comparatives and superlatives.
How you rate 14 words, average; 19, good; 22, very good; 25, excellent

Saturday's answers
anew, claw, clew, craw, crawl, crew, crewman, curlew, lawn, **lawrencium**, lwei, mewl, wail, wailer, wain, wale, wane, ware, warm, warn, waul, weal, wean, wear, weir, wile, wince, wincer, wine, wire, wireman, wren

Killer Gentle No 8820



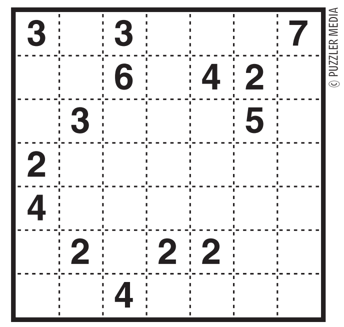
Killer Tricky No 8821



As with standard Sudoku, fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9. Each set of cells joined by dotted lines must add up to the target number in its top-left corner. Within each set of cells joined by dotted lines, a digit cannot be repeated.

Cluelines Stuck on Sudoku, Killer or KenKen? Call 0901 293 6263 before midnight to receive four clues for any of today's puzzles. Calls cost £1 plus your telephone company's network access charge. SP: Spoke, 0333 202 3390 (Mon-Fri 9am-5.30pm).

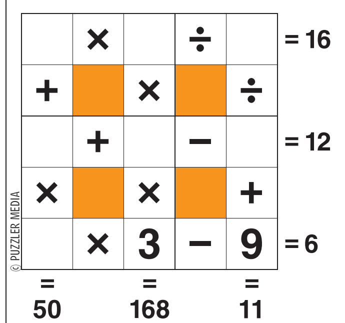
Cell Blocks No 4754



Divide the grid into square or rectangular blocks, each containing one digit only. Every block must contain the number of cells indicated by the digit inside it.

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Set Square No 3413



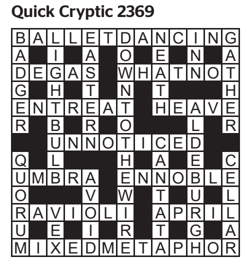
Enter each of the numbers from 1 to 9 in the grid, so that the six sums work. We've placed two numbers to get you started. Each sum should be calculated left to right or top to bottom.

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Please note, BODMAS does not apply

Solutions

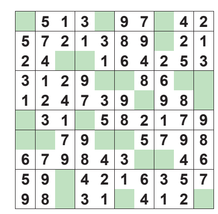
Quick Cryptic 2369



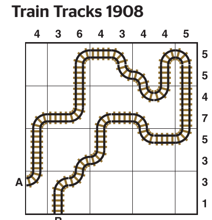
Codeword 4870



Kakuro 3409



Train Tracks 1908

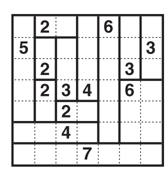


Chess — Winning Move
1 ... Qg3+! 2 hxg3 Rh1 is mate

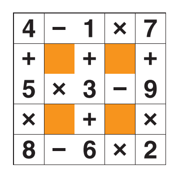
Concise Quintagram
1 Tax
2 Summer
3 Public
4 Package
5 *Holiday Inn*

Cryptic Quintagram
1 Cheat
2 Charm
3 Candle
4 Lebanon
5 Lost cause

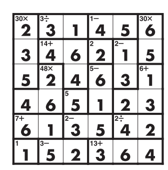
Cell Blocks 4753



Set Square 3412

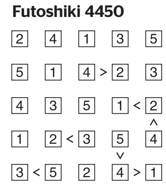


KenKen 5862

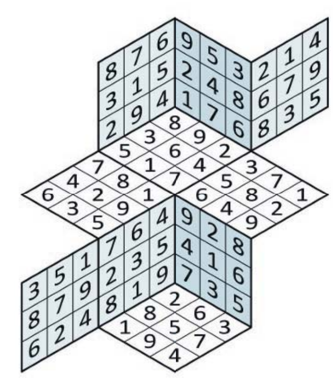


Word watch
Quannet (a) A flat file or rasp used as a plane (*Collins*)
Murgeon (c) To mock with grimaces (*Chambers*)
Corsned (a) An exorcised piece of bread (*OED*)

Futoshiki 4450



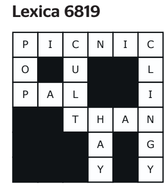
Tredoku 1780



Sudoku 13,960

9	3	4	2	5	6	1	8	7
1	6	2	8	4	7	5	3	9
7	8	5	3	1	9	4	6	2
5	2	9	7	3	1	8	4	6
3	7	6	5	8	4	2	9	1
4	1	8	9	6	2	7	5	3
6	9	1	4	7	5	3	2	8
2	4	3	1	9	8	6	7	5
8	5	7	6	2	3	9	1	4

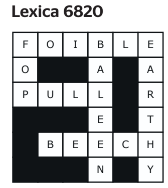
Lexica 6819



Killer 8819

7	8	4	5	2	6	3	9	1
1	5	3	7	9	4	8	6	2
9	6	2	8	3	1	7	5	4
6	4	9	3	7	2	5	1	8
3	7	5	6	1	8	4	2	9
2	1	8	9	4	5	6	7	3
5	9	1	4	8	7	2	3	6
4	2	6	1	5	3	9	8	7
8	3	7	2	6	9	1	4	5

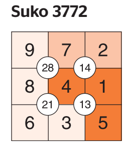
Lexica 6820



Quiz
1 Prince Edward **2** Mao Zedong **3** Django Reinhardt **4** Aberfan **5** Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh **6** Pumpkin spice latte **7** Henry Morgan **8** *Calvin and Hobbes* **9** WWT or Wildfowl & Wetlands Trust **10** Malcolm III Canmore **11** Mark Gertler **12** Countee Cullen **13** Cape Colony **14** Ken Buchanan. He became the undisputed world lightweight champion in 1971 **15** Rod Stewart

Brain Trainer
Easy 75
Medium 221
Harder 2,393

Suko 3772



Square Routes 213



Word watch
David Parfitt

Quannet
a A flat file or rasp
b A medieval brass instrument
c An infinitesimally small amount

Murgeon
a To thrive or flourish
b A large bony fish
c To mock with grimaces

Corsned
a An exorcised piece of bread
b Made rougher or more abrasive
c One of the horns of a billy goat

Answers on page 15

Sudoku

Easy No 13,961

			7					
		2			1	9	6	
	1		8	6	9			2
9		6						5
		7				4	3	
	4	5				1	9	6
	7			2	8		1	4
	6			3	5	2		
		1	6		4	5		

Difficult No 13,962

		1				5	2	9
			4	3			1	6
	4	2	1					3
8		9				2		5
3					8	1	4	
2	8			5	4			
5	9	3				8		

Fiendish No 13,963

4								
			5	2		9		8
		7				4		
	4	9		7	5	6		
3			8					4
	1	8		4	6	3		
		1				7		
			4	1		8		5
8								

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Fill the grid so that every column, every row and every 3x3 box contains the digits 1 to 9.

The Times Daily Quiz
Olav Bjortomt

1 Which prince was granted the title Duke of Edinburgh on his 59th birthday on March 10, 2023?

2 Which Chinese communist leader, who died in 1976, is known as the "Great Helmsman"?

3 The John Lewis jazz standard *Django* is named after which Belgian-born guitar legend?

4 In which Welsh village was Pantglas Junior School engulfed by coal waste in 1966?

5 Tobias Menzies won an Emmy for playing which prince in *The Crown*?

6 Which Starbucks coffee drink is known by the abbreviation PSL?

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15

7 Which Welsh buccaneer sacked old Panama City in 1671?

8 Rosalyn, aka Roz, is a title character's babysitter in which American comic strip?

9 What is "the UK's leading wetland conservation charity"?

10 Who was king of Scotland at the time of the Norman conquest in 1066?

11 In 1916, which British artist painted *Merry-Go-Round* and *Gilbert Cannan and his Mill*?

12 A leading figure of the Harlem Renaissance, which US poet wrote *The Ballad of the Brown Girl* (1927)?

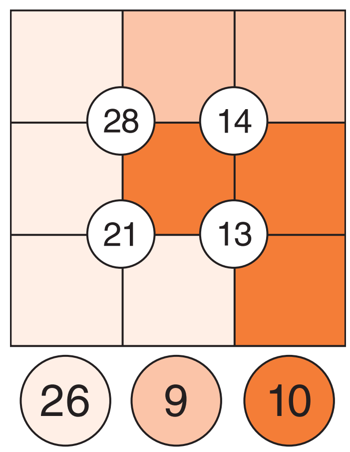
13 John Charles Molteno (1814-86) was the first prime minister of which British colony?

14 Who was Scotland's first undisputed boxing world champion?

15 Which British singer is pictured?

Answers on page 15

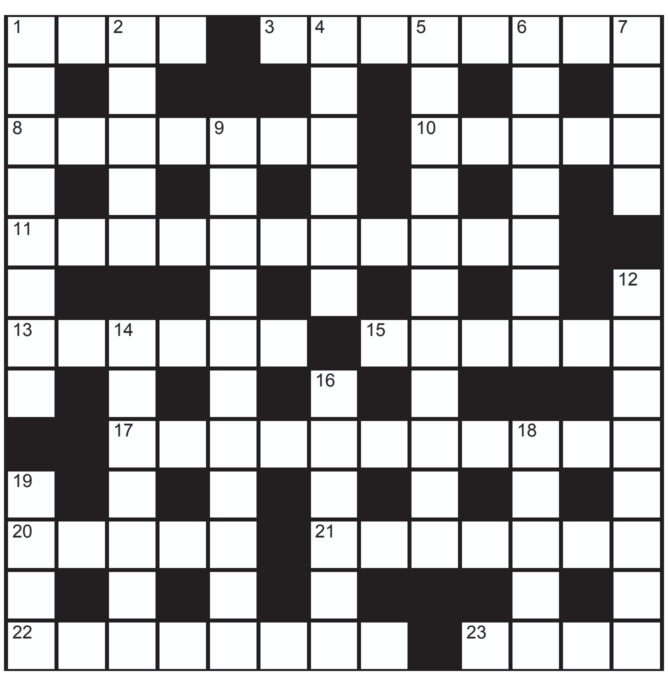
Suko No 3772



Place the numbers 1 to 9 in the spaces so that the number in each circle is equal to the sum of the four surrounding spaces, and each colour total is correct

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The Times Quick Cryptic
No 2370 by Breadman



Across
1 Welshman's raised floor (4)
3 Strained sweet courses knocked back (8)
8 Exercise before small drink (5-2)
10 Suppose old identification number unusable ultimately (5)
11 Group of musical mimics curtailed trip, reportedly barred on Scottish isle (7,4)
13 Key tip joining variable fabric (6)
15 Jack and Nigel arranged short catchy tune (6)
17 Dark, cold agent, powerfully built, needing no introduction (11)
20 Friend in the past touring Michigan (5)
21 Signior regularly holds arm up in the air (2,5)
22 Move along slippery surface with girl following cones maybe (3-5)
23 Eager, bringing forward new joint (4)

Down
1 Fool declines credit (8)
2 Ancient British tribe somewhat artistic, enigmatic (5)
4 Hat drunkard pinches quietly (6)
5 A Manc goalie, awfully self-important (11)
6 Singular language used by golf party (7)
7 Fight between two outstanding lawyers primarily (4)
9 One appearing in court in connection with a racket? (11)
12 Choppy sea, for me, horrifying (8)
14 Slope incorporated railway (7)
16 Whimsical old fashion designer embracing individual (6)
18 Mark, during Christmas, served up fruit (5)
19 Tasteless stuff supported by one French filmmaker (4)

*Friday's solution on page 15**

T GIFTS



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